



**FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE**

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

Approved for public release;
Distribution Unlimited

JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 2

19980506 152

REPRODUCED BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22161

Near East & South Asia

JPRS-NEA-92-167

CONTENTS

16 December 1992

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Tunisian Cement Exporters Prosecuted by Spain [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE ECONOMIE Nov]	1
--	---

NEAR EAST

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Iran Viewed as Threat to Gulf Security [Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 7 Oct]	2
Jordan, Sudan Form Council; Trade Figures Given [London AL-HAYAH 4 Nov]	2
GCC Economies' Deficits Double in 1991 [London AL-HAYAH 1 Nov]	3

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Al-Hut on Carter, PLO Position on Elections [Beirut AL-SAFIR 24 Oct]	4
'Arafat, Abu-Mazin Said Differing on Talks	6
Disagree on 3 Issues [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 8 Nov]	6
Sha'th Denies Report [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 12 Nov]	7
'Urayqat: Negotiations Cost PLO \$5 Million [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 7 Dec]	8
Hamas, PIJ Form 'Joint Coordination Committee' [Amman AL-RIBAT 18 Nov]	8
Writer Says Leaders Reviewing Talks Strategy [London AL-HAYAH 9 Nov]	9
Report Profiles PFLP's Qatamish, Arrest [London AL-MAJALLAH 28 Oct]	9
Report Shows Prisons as Intifadah Training Camps [Amman AL-DUSTUR 15 Oct]	11
Update on Infrastructure Planning, Committees [London AL-HAYAH 10 Nov]	13
Arab Technical Studies on Gaza Railroad Begin [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 7 Nov]	15
EC Financing Expected To Cover 120,000 Apartments [London AL-HAYAH 3 Nov]	15

EGYPT

Mubarak's Economic Policy Reviewed [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 28 Oct]	16
Islamist Victory in Lawyers Union Analyzed [ROSE AL-YUSUF 21 Sep]	17
Islamic Alliance in Governorate Elections [Amman AL-LIWA' 14 Oct]	19
Official Describes Ozone Protection Initiatives [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 4 Nov]	20
Experts Discuss Shortcomings in Scientific Research [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 28 Oct]	21

JORDAN

Germany Finances Water Recycling Projects [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 15 Nov]	22
Politicians Voice Reservations on Parties [AL-LIWA' 28 Oct]	23
IAF Head on Other Parties, Ideology, Membership [AL-RIBAT 13 Oct]	24
Editorial Defends Hizballah, Armed Conflicts [AL-LIWA' 28 Oct]	26
Government Issues 1991 Census Figures [AL-DUSTUR 13 Oct]	26
Crops Destroyed Due to Polluted Water [AL-DUSTUR 14 Oct]	27
Sales Tax To Take Effect in Early 1993 [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 6 Nov; etc.]	27
Building Boom Spawns Black Market for Concrete [London AL-MAJALLAH 25 Nov]	27

LEBANON

Election of Parliamentary Committees Reported [London AL-HAYAH 6 Nov]	28
---	----

OMAN

Government Expands Assembly's Legislative Powers [London AL-HAYAH 20 Oct]	30
TV Carries Assembly Hearing on Projects [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 30 Oct]	30

QATAR

Aluminum Mill To Be Built for \$1.5 Billion [London AL-HAYAH 1 Nov]	31
---	----

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Six Wounded in Incident at Omani Border [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 10 Nov]	32
Projected Draft Budget at \$5.5 Billion [London AL-HAYAH 10 Nov]	32

WESTERN SAHARA

Socioeconomic Situation; Status of Polisario Seen [London AL-MAJALLAH 7-13, 14-20, 21-27 Oct]	32
--	----

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Officials Comment on Postponement of Elections	40
Salih on Corruption, Violence [London AL-HAYAH 28 Oct]	40
Postponement to Mid-February [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 29 Oct]	41
Justification for Postponement [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 30 Oct]	41

SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

Official Views State of Education [Tehran RESALAT 31 Oct]	44
---	----

Tunisian Cement Exporters Prosecuted by Spain
93AF0231A Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE ECONOMIE
in French Nov 92 p 47

[Article by Christophe Deschamps: "Dumping of Tunisian Cement in Spain"]

[Text] The sale of Tunisian cement to Spain at cut-rate prices between 1988 and 1991 is the subject of a suit filed with the Commission in Brussels in January 1992 by Spanish cement manufacturers. The case could signal a limit to the freedom granted to North African countries to export their industrial products to the EEC. Two explanations have been put forward: Either (1) The Tunisian exports were the result of a European decision to support the cement industry in the neighboring Maghreb, in which case that policy should have been made public and the Spanish cement manufacturers who suffered from the "unfair competition" have a right to demand compensation; or (2) the customary rules of international trade were violated. In the coming weeks, Brussels is expected to issue a ruling in this delicate case, which it took up in late April. Meanwhile, Tunisia, accused of dumping, has maintained that its manufacturers were within their rights. At the same time, Spanish speculators have been counting their profits: Taking advantage of the high demand for cement on Spain's buoyant market leading up to the heady year of 1992, they imported cheap cement and resold it at a 10-percent mark-up—just below the prevailing price for Spanish cement.

The argument put forward by Oficemen, the professional organization of Spanish cement manufacturers, limits the case to its legal aspects and seeks to prove that dumping occurred in violation of EEC and GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] rules, causing losses to local industries.

Despite the large output of Spanish cement factories, a very rapid expansion in building activity caused Spain to supplement domestic production with imports, although not only from Tunisia. Cement was also imported from Turkey, Cyprus, Romania, Yugoslavia, and even Greece.

The Spanish law firm on the case contends that the Tunisian cement was sold at a dumping margin of as much as 40 percent of the domestic market price, the equivalent of 17 ECUs [European currency units] per metric ton.

"Europe cannot exist as a fortress, building walls to separate it from the rest of the world, but the rules of trade must be clarified and they must be respected by third countries so that the brunt of such transactions are not borne by an isolated professional group," Oficemen's lawyers explain. "In this case," they add, "Spain's manufacturers had to confront the problem of declining sales and plummeting market prices."

Is the cement trade more susceptible than others to this type of situation? The Spanish manufacturers who supplied the eastern and southern coasts of Spain were the hardest hit. That is because cement is not readily transportable by land, and the only cost-effective way to transport large quantities of it is by ship. On the other hand, it takes a large amount of capital to build a new cement factory, while the raw material used in production can be had at a very moderate price. The need to recover their capital investments and earn foreign exchange would explain why the Tunisian manufacturers sought to expand their exports—even at cut-rate prices.

But the suit before the Commission in Brussels seems too lenient towards the Spanish speculators who stockpiled the cement awaiting the right moment to sell it. The case is a sensitive one for the Commission, all the more so because Europe claims to be interested in helping the economies of the Maghreb nations.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Iran Viewed as Threat to Gulf Security*93AF0218A Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English & Oct 92 p 7*

[Text] In its efforts to extend its influence, Iran has looked south to Sudan, west to Algeria and north to the newly independent Islamic republics of the former Soviet Union. But its eyes are always fixed on the Gulf. With its sensitive international strategic value, due to oil and other factors, control of the Gulf has been and remains Iran's foremost goal.

Since Saddam Hussein committed his murderous folly of invading Kuwait on 2 August 1990, calling down the wrath of international legitimacy which repelled Iraqi forces and ultimately reduced the power and sway of Iraq in the region, Iran has attempted to assume the role of Saddam Hussein's successor by establishing its hegemony in the Gulf. And until now, the Iranian leadership appears far more clever, even cunning if you wish, than Saddam Hussein. One cannot be certain whether we are witnessing the implementation of Iran's declared strategic policy or whether it is a temporary tactic concealing Iran's goal to establish an iron grip over the entire Gulf.

The seizure of Abu Musa island is only the most recent of Iran's crimes. Previously, Iran had taken over two other islands—Greater Tunb and Little Tunb—that had belonged to the UAE. Quite understandably, the Arab League responded angrily to these acts. On the morning of the conclusion of its 98th session it issued a resolution condemning Iran's occupation of the three islands. It called for respect of the UAE's sovereignty and territorial integrity and supported any measures the UAE might take to assert its sovereignty over the islands. They would also support the UAE in bringing the issue of Iranian violations to the attention of the U.N. The U.N., they said, should call upon Iran to respect the international agreements signed by the UAE confirming its sovereignty over the islands, particularly since Iran's actions threaten the peace and stability of the whole region.

Iran must be aware that Saddam Hussein's designs to exert control over the Gulf brought disaster to his country and opened the door to international intervention in the area. But Iran seems heedless of this lesson. In order to accomplish its aims, it must also disturb the stability of the Arab world as a whole. This will particularly effect Egypt, the major power in the region capable of protecting the Gulf.

It is sad too that Iran is using the cloak of Islam to accomplish its worldly deeds. But we have seen this before. Iran established links with the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria, and now exerts nearly total control over the thinking of the Sudanese leadership, using Sudan as a claw with which to create trouble for Egypt. They used the Egyptian territories of Halayeb and Shalatin to transport arms to extremist elements in Upper Egypt, as a means of disrupting the stability of Egypt and preventing it from playing its leading role in protecting the security of the Gulf.

The Iranians are also seeking to strengthen their military forces and acquire nuclear arms to enforce their control over the Gulf. But the Iranian strategists have underestimated the complex and vicious rivalry of regional and international interests, and do not realise that Iran could suffer the same fate as Iraq if it doesn't heed the voice of reason. The sick Iranian mind must imagine that Saddam Hussein was the legitimate protector of the Gulf and that with Iraq reduced, Iran must step in to fill the void. Unfortunately, strategic equations in the Gulf are far greater than Saddam Hussein and far more complex than the petty dreams of the Iranian leadership.

Jordan, Sudan Form Council; Trade Figures Given*93AE0085A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 4 Nov 92 p 12*

[Article by Salah Hazin: "Jordan and Sudan To Form Joint Industrial Council"]

[Text] Jordan and Sudan agreed to form a joint industrial council to bolster industrial cooperation between the two countries.

The agreement followed talks with a Sudanese delegation that was headed by engineer al-Sa'id 'Uthman Mahjub, Sudanese minister of state for expatriate affairs, who was in the Jordanian capital to inaugurate the second Amman exposition of Sudanese products.

The delegation met with a number of Jordanian officials, including Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, minister of trade and industry; Muhammad al-Saqqaf, minister of supply; Khaldun abu-Hassan, president of the Amman Chamber of Industry, and Muhammad 'Asfur, president of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce.

The agreement between the Sudanese delegation and Abu-Hassan did not entail any specific provision for implementation, but simply stated that the council is to be established as soon as possible.

The second exposition of Sudanese products opened yesterday in accordance with a Jordanian-Sudanese agreement that was reached last year. A review of that agreement's provisions topped the Sudanese agenda of talks with the Jordanians.

The first exposition of Sudanese products, held last January in Amman, had sales revenues of 125,000 dinars, compared with 2 million dinars in sales at the Jordanian industrial exposition that was held simultaneously in Khartoum.

Figures released by Jordan's Ministry of Trade and Industry indicate that during the 10-month period that ended last August, Jordan exported to Sudan various products valued at 9.5 million dinars, while Sudanese imports during the same period exceeded 2 million dinars [as published], not counting trade under last year's parallel transaction agreement between Sudan and Jordan's Trade Center and Export Promotion Organization. That agreement was for 70 million dinars, to be shared equally.

GCC Economies' Deficits Double in 1991

93AE0110A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
1 Nov 92 p 11

[Report from Dubayy: "GCC Economies Resume Growth After the War; Gulf Investment Organization Expects Financial Resources To Largely Forego Infrastructure Projects"]

[Text] General budget deficits realized by GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] governments last year are estimated at \$27 billion, up from \$13.2 billion in 1990, according to a Gulf economic report.

The report, prepared by Gulf Investment Organization, said that the deficits varied in size from one state to another and ranged from a few hundred million dollars in the UAE [United Arab Emirates] general budget to an \$18.2 billion shortfall in the budget of Kuwait.

The report added that Gulf countries covered their deficits in various ways including \$10.3 billion in foreign borrowing and about \$3 billion in domestic bank loans. Other deficit funding sources included foreign lines of credit, proceeds from the sale of assets abroad, loans, and government development bonds, and treasury notes.

Recurring Deficit

The organization's report explained that current economic indicators in the Gulf states show that Gulf budget deficits will continue into 1992, but at slower rates now that financial obligations arising from the Gulf war have been fulfilled and Kuwaiti reconstruction has been largely completed.

The organization emphasized that the economies of the Arab Gulf states quickly resumed their normal rates of growth once the Gulf war came to an end. The banking sector attained true prosperity; industrial production rose, and governments resumed their obligations of funding major infrastructure projects.

The report said: "The private sector rushed in to play an effective role in driving the wheels of economic development. Governments, prompted by low oil revenues in 1991, resorted to budget deficits in order to maintain growth rates at, or close to, their preinvasion levels. Preliminary forecasts show that 1991 real rates of growth varied from .5 percent to 6.5 percent, Kuwait being the exception. Consumer product indicators, in a departure from previous years, exceeded their limits and ranged from 2 percent to 8 percent."

Three Variables

The report noted that the future economic horizons of the GCC states will depend on three variables—oil revenues, the extent of their international obligations, and the size of their defense expenditures. The GCC economy as a whole still revolves around the public sector even though private sector contributions to GDP, about 35 percent, are at their highest level ever.

The organization said in its report that it expects petroleum volumes and prices to decline from their levels of the

past two years and that public debt service will increase as a consequence of public debt accumulation over the past 10 years. In addition, the GCC states will come under increasing pressure to transfer more public financial resources abroad and away from domestic markets as a result of their financial obligations to cover war burdens and help countries hurt by the Gulf crisis, their Arab obligations, and their commitments to the Commonwealth of Independent States bloc.

The [Gulf] crisis has furthermore created new defense situations that require the reallocation of government financial resources available to investment and infrastructure projects.

It added that the effects of lower oil revenues, the rise in fund transfers, and the increase in outlays for nonproductive economic activity may lead to less government investment outlays and consequently to lower economic growth rates in the region.

As for banking sector performance in GCC states, the Gulf Investment Organization said since the oil boom of the mid-1970's, the sector has faced a series of problems arising from opening and operating new financial institutions, the lack of accounting and legal frameworks and developed financial markets, economic stagnation in the mid-1980's, and the Gulf crisis.

The banking sector, however, is currently showing clear signs of improvement. Assets of commercial banks in the GCC states increased from \$15 billion to more than \$175 billion from 1975 to 1991. The year 1991 was especially notable because most banks in the GCC states achieved faster growth and outstanding profits as a result of increased government spending, higher demand for credit by both public and private sectors, and the repatriation of large sums of capital that had been transferred abroad during the Gulf war.

The report said that banking system performance continues to improve. Credit strategies have generally been revised and refined. The makeup of assets available to banks has improved. Innovative and ambitious financial vehicles have been introduced to attract deposits. New credit plans have been put forth. But certain problems persist, such as the oversupply of banks which prompted officials in Kuwait, Oman, and the UAE to urge voluntary bank mergers.

The report also pointed out apparent Gulf banking sector portfolio imbalances in favor of foreign investments and loans which accounted for more than half of bank assets by mid-1991. It added: "That situation must change in the near future in response to two major developments. Countries in the region have changed from net exporters to net importers of capital and they have adopted policies to liberalize domestic interest rates. Such policies, already in place in most states, were adopted in Qatar in 1991." It pointed out that a working plan for 1990's would give the banking sector a major role in helping the GCC economies realize a constant rate of self growth in light of the anticipated deficit probability in all general budgets and trade balances.

Borrowing

As the region changes from a net lender to a net borrower, commercial and investment banks will face new challenges in acquiring the skills necessary to offer the financial services that would attract back to the region assets that are currently being invested abroad.

Such change was manifested in 1991 in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE, not only in more medium- and long-term domestic bank loans to the private sector, but also in substantial domestic bank loans to joint ventures and to governments, as well. This trend, it should be pointed out, mandates such support measures as the introduction and legislation of new financial vehicles to expand capital markets and the implementation of flexible monetary policies that would enable central monetary authorities to regulate and rationalize the financial sector.

The organization noted in the area of industrial development that the current GCC trend toward industrial expansion has been influenced by two new trends. The first is a trend toward industrialization for import-substitution, which has evolved over the past two decades and now tends to focus on major projects and export industries that utilize local raw materials and on the intensive utilization of energy. The other trend is a propensity to attract foreign capital and to tap foreign technology by entering into joint ventures with foreign enterprises.

The 1991 industrial investment climate in the region was also characterized by such important developments as the founding of the Bahrain Bank for Development and the introduction of a special Omani export promotion program. Current government policies to expand the role of the private sector have also been receiving an extra push.

The report mentioned that several GCC governments have made available many facilities for the implementation of carefully chosen and precisely planned projects. The sale to the private sector of certain government-owned and government-run enterprises has also energized the region. Many feasibility studies were undertaken to carefully scrutinize the privatization of the telecommunications sector in Kuwait and the central sewer system in Muscat, among others. Industrial production in the Gulf states, with the exception of Kuwait, continued the expansion that began in mid-1989.

Available data indicates that industrial sector growth in 1991 exceeded 9 percent, compared with GDP rates of growth of 8.2 percent in Oman and 8.5 percent in Saudi Arabia. Industrial growth indicators, such as employment opportunities in the industrial sector and imports of raw materials and capital goods, indicate that other GCC states achieved similar rates of growth as well.

Looking to the future, we find that plans to expand the region's industrial base continue in spite of historical impediments to growth. Planned industrial projects and those under implementation are estimated to cost between \$8 and \$12 billion and will depend less on public funding and government contributions than in the past. Such projects will likely be financed with the help of the private

sector, in joint arrangements with foreign enterprises, and by commercial loans and private domestic funds. It is also likely that the majority of these projects will focus on expanding existing capacity or on introducing more new products that utilize plentiful domestically available raw materials such as natural gas, aluminum, steel, copper, silicon, etc.

The Return of Confidence

In the contracting and construction sector, the organization explained that the return of confidence after the Gulf war has created a climate that fostered major investment opportunities in several fields, including defense and security. War-induced delays of many projects in the region created considerable demand for engineering and management consulting, bids and tenders, and financial consulting services in order to make up for lost time and to embark on new ventures.

The report pointed out that 1991 has produced a larger number of large projects that are expected to undergo implementation in the near future. Such projects focus primarily on electric power and natural gas, petroleum, and water development. The UAE, for instance, plans to undertake a \$1 billion project for natural gas liquefaction at Das Island. This project would supplement a current \$350 million project to develop Umm al-Shayf gas. The UAE also plans to expand the Jabal 'Ali oil field at a cost of \$2 billion and to enlarge al-Tawilah electric power station at an estimated cost of \$1.9 billion. Other plans include three projects to boost electric power generating capacity in each of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and al-'Ayn at an estimated aggregate cost of \$580 million.

Saudi Arabia decided in 1991 to implement oil and gas projects at a cost of \$810 million, as well as defense projects costing \$1.5 billion. The kingdom also plans to expand the Ra's Tannurah oil refinery at a cost of more than \$10 billion and to enlarge the industrial complexes of Hadid, Bin-Zahir, (Bin-Sina), and al-Sharq companies, thereby creating an estimated 10,000 new jobs in Jubayl by 1996. Augmented defense outlays also should create major employment opportunities in construction and supply.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Al-Hut on Carter, PLO Position on Elections

93AE0100A Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 24 Oct 92 p 3

[Interview with Shafiq al-Hut, head of Beirut PLO Office, by Muna Sukkariyah "following al-Hut's return from meetings of the Palestinian Central Council in Tunis last week"; place not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted]

[Sukkariyah] Some people expect a kind of commitment or principles to be proclaimed for the continuation of the negotiations, regardless of the outcome of the U.S. elections.

[Al-Hut] I am confident that the negotiations will continue regardless of the outcome of the elections. This is a state decision that essentially is not affected by the coming of

the Democrats or the departure of the Republicans. One might point out here that if the Democrats come to office, former president Jimmy Carter might take assume the task that Baker shouldered previously, but Carter would be a special envoy and not secretary of state. In any case, this is what we have heard from Carter personally.

[Sukkariyah] Who met with him?

[Al-Hut] Some Palestinian-American personalities met with him.

[Sukkariyah] What did he tell them?

[Al-Hut] He said he will ask Clinton to assign him this task in the Middle East, although not in an official capacity, on the grounds that he is familiar with this issue and believes that it is his moral duty to find solutions to the problems of the area.

[Sukkariyah] Did he talk about a particular concept to solve the problem, particularly in the Palestinian-Israeli track?

[Al-Hut] The most important thing Carter said, and rightly so, was that it is impossible to resolve what remains of the Arab-Israeli conflict without the United States playing an effective role in the current negotiations. He believes that Bush, in his present management of the negotiations—that is, being content with playing the role of the ineffectual mediator, will not lead to any results. He cited his recollections of the Camp David talks as a proof that what he is saying is true. [passage omitted]

[Sukkariyah] Would Carter continue to implement what the Camp David treaty said?

[Al-Hut] He would proceed from the Camp David premise, but he believes that it is necessary to make certain changes, changes that time and developments in Palestine, in the Arab homeland, and in the international community dictate. [passage omitted]

[Sukkariyah] Will the Syrian-Israeli talks lead to anything at present?

[Al-Hut] From my observation of the progress of negotiations I feel that the Israeli negotiator is interested in two parties in particular, the Palestinian and the Syrian. This is because with respect to the Palestinian side, the Israeli side feels that any subject it discusses with it touches on the fate of Israeli existence, even if the matter ends up with the Palestinians merely remaining in the West Bank and Gaza Strip without a political solution. This would mean 2.7 million Palestinians will remain in what is called Israel and the occupied territories. With regard to Syria, of course, it is the country that is most capable among the confrontation states of harming Israel militarily.

[Sukkariyah] Why does the Palestinian negotiator insist on discussing UN Resolution 242 now, before talks about the transitional stage and other issues are complete?

[Al-Hut] Perhaps from a literal standpoint, the Palestinian side appears as if it is leaping ahead to the confirmation of the legitimacy of Resolution 242, because the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be discussed at the

end of the transitional period. But Israel is the one that is violating Resolution 242 at this stage. In other words, Israel is taking steps on the ground (such as settlement-building) that it is not allowed to take. If agreement on Resolution 242 waits until the end of the transitional period, by the same token Israel should stop taking any measures that challenge Resolution 242's provisions, which consider the West Bank and Gaza Strip as occupied land and, therefore, withdrawing from them is a must. Just as in the era of Shamir, in the era of Rabin's Israel is still acting in the West Bank and Gaza on the basis that it is Judea and Samaria, not occupied territories. Therefore, Resolution 242 does not apply to them and to their population, nor does the 1949 Geneva fourth convention that deals with all matters concerning occupation and occupied lands.

Hence it should be understood that it is not the Palestinian side that is leaping ahead or challenging the invitation [to the talks]. Rather it is Israel, with its actions on the ground, particularly the settlements that have swallowed more than 50 percent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel is the one that is leaping ahead in defiance.

[Sukkariyah] Does the Palestinian negotiator really want legislative elections in the West Bank and Gaza?

[Al-Hut] Of course. If the Palestinian negotiator succeeds in achieving legislative assembly elections under international supervision, then this would be a great accomplishment.

[Sukkariyah] Does the PLO have the same desire?

[Al-Hut] It is demanding it. The transitional government, as we understand it, is a transitional national authority whose task is to come into power through the United Nations or an international group, preparatory to continuing the negotiations regarding the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, that is, regarding full sovereignty for the occupied Palestinian territory.

[Sukkariyah] Isn't the PLO afraid that Hamas might gain a share of [assembly] seats if elections were held?

[Al-Hut] I am confident that our people will elect those who represent their national interests. Hamas is a struggling faction that has its own status. It should occupy its position in the political framework, including the Palestine National Council [PNC]. When I speak about democracy, I believe in it.

[Sukkariyah] But the PLO, like all of the Arab regimes, does not like democracy?

[Al-Hut] The PLO is in itself a front organization that includes many organizations. So why should Hamas be precluded?

[Sukkariyah] There is talk about the possibility of the PLO appointing deputies [to the PNC] rather than holding elections.

[Al-Hut] What is important is that the elected body derive its powers from the people.

[Sukkariyah] How does the image of the Palestinian home appear to you now?

[Al-Hut] There is more than one Palestinian home.

[Sukkariyah] This is the reason why we are asking.

[Al-Hut] Our concerns are many, and the most serious of them is that this "home" has become several homes.

[Sukkariyah] Let us begin with the concerns of the people at home, if we may say so.

[Al-Hut] There are two kinds at homes.

[Sukkariyah] What is the red line beyond which the Palestinian negotiator will not go?

[Al-Hut] I have not heard of any red lines. My personal red line is a man called Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi. I do not believe that a struggler like him will accept a solution that is unacceptable to the Palestinian people in a referendum, a solution based on exaggeration and rosy dreams. But at the same time, he will not succumb to the bitter reality or to an imposed solution.

[Sukkariyah] Under what circumstances will the delegation representing the people in the occupied territories consider the existence of the PLO as no longer justifiable?

[Al-Hut] I believe that the PLO has been and should remain a means and not an end. It is a means of struggle for the achievement of the Palestinian people's national rights. Once these objectives are achieved, there will no longer be a need for the PLO.

[Sukkariyah] Could this happen?

[Al-Hut] It cannot. Even if the legislative elections were to take place, their [the assembly's] powers will be limited to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, both with respect to population and land. But what about the Palestinian people in diaspora? Who will represent them in that part of their cause—the right of return.

[Sukkariyah] What if one of the negotiations' result is to keep the Palestinians in diaspora where they are?

[Al-Hut] Both the Palestinian official and public opinion reject rehabilitation.

[Sukkariyah] Rejection is something, and solution is another....

[Al-Hut] Should this happen, it on calls the Palestinian guest and the Arab host to reconcile their stands. How will this subject be dealt with? I do not wish to prattle about the subject. I call on the Lebanese and Palestinians to hold seminars and conduct studies on the subject in order to discuss temporary solutions that would forestall any possible clashes or fighting.

[Sukkariyah] Is this warning based on expectations?

[Al-Hut] Yes.

[Sukkariyah] Will legislative elections take place in the occupied territories?

[Al-Hut] No, because the Israelis will not accept that.

[Sukkariyah] What is the Palestinian negotiator then waiting for?

[Al-Hut] In this case, the Palestinian should go back to the PNC and to the Palestinian national movement, with all its factions, in order to evaluate the situation and make the appropriate decision. No Palestinian faction, party, or official can bear this responsibility alone.

[Sukkariyah] How do you evaluate the Palestinian situation?

[Al-Hut] It is suffering from confusion.

[Sukkariyah] Is Jordan still afraid of you?

[Al-Hut] It is afraid for itself.

[Sukkariyah] Of whom is it afraid?

[Al-Hut] It is afraid of a solution that would send masses of Palestinian refugees from the occupied territories or from Lebanon to Jordan. The Jordanian press speaks of a Palestinian evacuation from Lebanon to Jordan.

[Sukkariyah] What about the Palestine Central Council meeting that was held in Tunis recently?

[Al-Hut] I have felt that those who accept the negotiations and those who reject them are incompetent in defending their positions. This is the core of the problem.

[Sukkariyah] How do you evaluate the seven negotiation sessions? In your view, will there be peace?

[Al-Hut] There are still differences over the topics of discussion, but this does not mean that the peace process will not continue until its end. The difficulty is at the beginning, but once agreement on the topics of discussion, that is, on the principles, is reached then we will enter into the whirlpool of details.

'Arafat, Abu-Mazin Said Differing on Talks

Disagree on 3 Issues

93AE0103A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
8 Nov 92 p 1

[Article by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulayb in Tunis: "Conflict Threatens Work of Follow-Up Committee"]

[Text] Palestinian circles have noticed a renewed coolness recently between Yasir 'Arafat and a group of supporters of Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), chief of the committee directing the peace negotiations. People ascribe the coolness to the appearance of fundamental differences over several issues, especially the policy on UN Resolution 242 in the negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli delegations, the idea of holding multilateral refugee committee meetings in Tunisia, and the Jordanian-Israeli agreement on a working agenda.

With regard to the first issue, UN Resolution 242, the newspaper HA'ARETZ had alluded to progress between the Palestinian and Israeli delegations in the form of an agreement to form unofficial working committees to study the issues of land, water, and the powers of the autonomy council. When he was informed of the item, Palestinian

President Yasir 'Arafat wrote to Nabil Sha'th, then with the delegation in Washington, requesting clarification and expressing surprise at what he considered an overstep by the follow-up committee.

A copy of 'Arafat's inquiry was sent to Abu-Mazin, who replied with the explanation that what HA'ARETZ had printed was true and that the matter had been agreed upon in 'Arafat's own presence and with his consent. The decision, according to Abu-Mazin's reply, had been not to get into secondary issues in the first six days except when necessary, but that after those six days the delegation would enter into unofficial negotiations on secondary issues that were not related to Resolution 242.

'Arafat, however, in his response to Abu-Mazin's clarification, said, "The follow-up committee did not decide that" and that he had "warned against putting Resolution 242 aside and entering into unofficial negotiations on secondary issues."

After this correspondence, the follow-up committee's meeting was held, and a broad disagreement broke out between the two sides. 'Arafat spoke in a way understood by all, saying that it diminished the trust in some members of the side running the negotiations. He confirmed at the end of the discussion that he would not acknowledge any letter from Washington not signed by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, and that he would not acknowledge any instruction to the delegation without his being consulted.

The second disagreement was the proposal on holding refugee committee meetings in Tunisia. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's sources say that 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Darawishah, the Arab deputy in the Knesset, came to Tunis in mid-October with an American-Israeli letter to the Palestinians, calling upon them to get the permission of the Tunisian Government to host the refugee committee meeting in Tunis. The Palestinians who met with al-Darawishah divided into two groups, one led by 'Arafat, who reacted to the idea with the fear that it would cause further division in Palestinian ranks, to say nothing of Arab reactions, especially Syria's. Another group, made up of Abu-Mazin, Nabil Sha'th, Hakam Bal'awi, and Abu-al-'Ala Quray', thought it an excellent idea, agreed to it, and defended it.

The Jordanian-Israeli agreement was also the focus of conflict between the two sides, although Abu-Mazin's group expressed its opposition to any public criticism, even unofficially.

Sha'th Denies Report

93AE0103B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
12 Nov 92 p 3

[Article by 'Ali Salih in London: "Nabil Sha'th to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: 'No Conflict With 'Arafat on 242; Unofficial Working Committees in Place,'"]

[Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, chief of the leadership committee overseeing the bilateral Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations, has confirmed the existence of unofficial Palestinian-Israeli working committees that are studying the issues

of land, water, and the powers of the autonomy committee. "These committees are part of the negotiations," he said. "We call them unofficial because no progress has been achieved at the level of the negotiations."

In its 8 November issue, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT published a report on these committees and the disagreement between PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat and Fatah Central Committee member and chief of the negotiations' follow-up committee Muhamud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin) over a number of issues, among them committees, Security Council Resolution 242, and the agreement on a working agenda reached by Jordan and Israel. This report stirred controversy at the highest levels of the Palestinian leadership in Tunis, which will not confirm or deny its contents, trying only to discover the source who leaked the information.

Dr. Sha'th, however, who spoke to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT by telephone from his office in Washington, where he is overseeing the bilateral negotiations there, denied that he had received a message from 'Arafat expressing surprise at what was considered an overstep on the part of the Palestinian follow-up committee led by Abu-Mazin or warning against putting Resolution 242 aside. "This never happened," he said, pointing out the total harmony and coordination among the members of the Palestinian negotiating team.

He said that what had been said about the disagreement between 'Arafat and Abu-Mazin over Resolution 242 had no basis in fact. He reaffirmed that the resolution "remains the basis we proceed from in the negotiations." He added, "Decisions are made only with the assent of President 'Arafat. And 'Arafat, with Abu-Mazin in the same room, talks to me twice a day."

On his membership in the follow-up committee, Sha'th denied that there was any committee member that considered it secret. "He refused to reveal the names of its members, saying only that Abu-Mazin led it. He said, "I have nothing to do with this committee, which is headquartered in Tunis. I work in Washington."

It is worth mentioning in this regard that Nabil Sha'th serves on this committee, along with Abu-Mazin, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbu, and Sulayman al-Najab.

In response to a question about the conflict between 'Arafat and Abu-Mazin over the initial Jordanian-Israeli agreement on a working agenda, and the latter's opposition to any official or unofficial criticism of the agreement, he said, "There is no conflict about it." He added: "The Palestinian side is objectively worried and has some real questions about the agreement. For our part, we have studied the draft of the agreement and found some worrying points, and so sent it on the leadership in Tunis, which studied them in greater detail and decided, in light of that, to send a delegation led by Abu-Mazin to the Jordanian capital to reach an understanding and see what the situation is." He continued: "The delegation returned from Amman with a positive spirit and submitted a report on its visit and the Jordanian clarifications. On the basis of

that, the PLO adopted its position, which was communicated to Amman, which made clear its willingness to deal with our reservations.

"In any case," he said, "this working agenda is, from a practical point of view, no more than a mere method for dividing up the time and defining the subjects that will be discussed."

Addressing the cause that pushed Jordan to agree upon a working schedule now, after a whole year of negotiating, without discussing the matter with the Palestinian side in advance, Sha'th explained that "the Jordanians considered it a technicality, not worth referring to us. He added, "Let us suspect our enemy, not our friends."

Sha'th explained, in his answer to a question on the course of the second part of the seventh round of negotiations that began in Washington early this week, "I may say that the negotiations really began on 23 August, not on 30 October 1991, as is known."

He went on to say, "There has been a change in the Israeli position—if not in its essence, then in the expressions used. The Israeli delegation no longer refers to the occupied territories as Judea and Samaria, as was the case under Shamir's government, and it has displayed its readiness to discuss land and water issues. The sign of that is the unofficial land and water committees mentioned above."

Responding to a question about whether the Palestinian negotiating team had conceded on legislative elections in the occupied territories, especially because of Israel's rejection of the idea, and after the Americans rejected it, Dr. Sha'th said, "We have not conceded it and will not concede it."

"America has not opposed legislative elections, either." When he was reminded of James Baker's statements on one of his tours of the region and Baker's meetings with Palestinians in the occupied territories in which he said, "Legislative elections take place in a state, and you are not a state," Sha'th denied that Baker had made any such statements. He confirmed America's rejection of the idea of a Palestinian state, but not legislative elections, because he did not get into that. "But if that does happen, we will halt the negotiations."

He added, "It is up to America to intervene in the question of Jerusalem on the basis of its [own] position, clarified in its letter of guarantees, which views Jerusalem as occupied territory."

On Israel's insistence on rejecting even the possibility of including the question of Jerusalem in the negotiating agenda, he said, "Whatever the Israeli position may be, our position is clear and unchanging. There will be no agreement that is not based on Resolution 242 or without the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. If Israel persists in ruling out Jerusalem, there will be no agreement."

'Urayqat: Negotiations Cost PLO \$5 Million

93P40063A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
7 Dec 92 p 2

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—Dr. Sa'ib al-'Urayqat, a member of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks, said that the delegation's expenditures have totaled \$5 million to date. In statements to journalists, he added that each round of negotiations costs the Palestinians \$700,000.

He explained that the PLO, which is responsible for paying the expenses, cannot sustain such sums in the future. He noted that the number of members in the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks exceeds 57, and some of them have been residing outside the occupied territories on a relatively permanent basis since the convening of the peace conference in Madrid at the end of last year.

Hamas, PIJ Form 'Joint Coordination Committee'

93P40064A Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 18 Nov 92 p 8

[Excerpt] Two Palestinian organizations have said that they have arrived at a joint formula for coordination and cooperation between their two political positions and views on developments in the Palestinian arena.

A statement issued by the Hamas Movement and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad [PIJ], and sent to QUDS PRESS said that the two movements have formed a joint coordination committee inside and outside [the occupied territories] to coordinate on new developments and urgent events. It added that officials from both sides studied the situation in the Palestinian arena together and concluded that "the first step on the road to victory and liberation" is to draft a charter of "brotherhood and cooperation" among all forces, factions, and personalities operating in the field of "Palestinian jihad," on the basis of fraternity and cooperation against the forces of "Zionist occupation."

The statement affirmed that the two sides have arrived at a charter of "brotherhood and cooperation" that calls for affirming the "unity of the Palestinian people" and the necessity of all forces and factions meeting on the basis of "one destiny and one future" and rejecting "the use of violence or killing to settle differences, to end disputes, or to impose opinions or directives." It also calls for "supporting discussion and dialogue among the various Palestinian forces as a civilized, useful method for bringing together ideas and strengthening cooperation in various areas" and agreement on continuing the intifadah and supporting it by all means.

The two movements called on their supporters and cadres in the occupied territories to commit to this charter "in letter and in spirit" as a step toward reaching a formula for mutual cooperation on activities in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

Writer Says Leaders Reviewing Talks Strategy

93AE0104A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
9 Nov 92 p 3

[Article by Husayn Hijazi in Nicosia: "Palestinians Reviewing Priorities To Include Rabin's Negotiating Moves"]

[Excerpts] The sides taking part in the Arab-Israeli negotiations may reassess their plans and positions in the final round of negotiations now that it is known who the new American president will be. Will they want to race against the new U.S. administration's taking power and achieve some kind of genuine progress, or will they prefer to wait until next January for this administration's intentions to become evident?

It is said that the Palestinians do not want to rush progress toward an agreement on a working agenda for the negotiations with Israel at this transitional stage, even though negotiation over this agenda has made quite good progress. Those who leak this information give the following reasons to back it up:

- The Palestinians now prefer to review their negotiating strategy, in light of the change in the rules of the game caused by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, which caught the Palestinian side off-guard, particularly after Rabin's victory in rigging the negotiating methods in such a way as to allow Israel a greater margin of room for maneuvering. [passage omitted]
- The Palestinians hope to explore, in this transitional phase, the possibility of being dealt the greatest number of cards to play in the talks. Among these cards are what we might call the Franco-Egyptian role, which has recently begun to take form—particularly after [Amr] Musa's visit to Paris and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres' visit before that. It is apparent that there is Egyptian-French encouragement for a more active French role in the talks as a balancing factor for pressure upon Israel and Washington.
- The Palestinians may now be more inclined to review their priorities, to focus more on the priority of the PLO's direct role in the negotiations in an attempt on the part of President Yasir 'Arafat to make use of his victory last year in getting around the Madrid formula as it related to Palestinian representation in the talks, which had forced the PLO to remain in the shadows.

'Arafat's two-track strategy may be explained as resting on demonstrating a link between giving the green light for easing an agreement in the Palestinian track and recognition on the part of the United States and Israel of the PLO's direct role. In this sense, the stalled progress of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations serves 'Arafat's new strategy, which is based on the principle of the negotiations' negative pressure in order to obtain the greater "prize": historic recognition of the PLO on the part of Israel.

As a result, the Palestinians are now giving priority to reassembling their negotiating position and strengthening it to contain Rabin's disruption of their negotiating methods and working to create parallel channels to develop pressure factors—and obtaining recognition of the PLO as primary negotiator.

Observers wonder whether the change in the White House will be an incentive for Syria to speed up its movement toward progress in the negotiations with Israel, to compete against any bad will on the part of the new American administration.

It is remarkable that of all of the parties, Israel feels the least need to act under the pressure of time. Thus Rabin is able to extend the maximum time limit and to obtain an autonomy agreement with the Palestinians before seeing what the new American administration can do. Will the priority on human rights in the Democrats' policy in the United States mean a priority to support a solution with the Palestinians, or that a Camp David formula is the best solution, or that the administration's retreat into domestic policy will be the great change, leaving Israel and the Arab sides to settle the negotiations however they like?

Report Profiles PFLP's Qatamish, Arrest

93AE0087A London AL-MAJALLAH
in Arabic 28 Oct 92 pp 26, 27

[Article by Nura Fakhuri, with 'Abd-al-Karim Samarah in Jerusalem: "Ahmad Qatamish Lived Underground in Ramallah While Being Hunted Occupation Authorities"]

[Text] Israeli occupation authorities have been hunting Ahmad Qatamish for 16 years. Meanwhile, he was living in his own home with his wife, Saha, who everybody thought was married to a Palestinian studying abroad, and with his daughter, Hanin, who is an American national and who carries the name of a different father. Qatamish is accused of being a leader of a banned organization. Occupation authorities said that Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] documents and files were found in his house at the time of his arrest on 1 September 1992.

At 1730 pm on the first day of this past September, Saha, Ahmad, and Hanin heard the sound of an explosion outside the door of their West Bank home. A few seconds later, four Israeli soldiers accompanied by Mossad agents were inside their apartment, throwing its contents about and shattering the life of a gentle family that lived with a deep secret for 16 years.

There, in that apartment, lived Ahmad Qatamish, whom Israeli authorities accuse of disappearing for 16 years, of membership in a banned organization, of being a provocateur, and of leading a political organization. They also accused him of full responsibility for the political activities of that organization (PFLP).

Day of Disappearance

Let us go back in time 16 years, to the day Ahmad Qatamish disappeared in 1976 from Ramallah in the occupied West Bank. He was then an adolescent youth whose soul had been etched with the image of his older

brother Muhammad, who was paralyzed after his arrest and torture in an Israeli prison. Ahmad was haunted by Muhammad's agony at the time he suddenly disappeared. Some thought him to have been martyred. Others believed that he left the occupied territories to live in some European country. Even his mother, Umm-Muhammad, had no news of him and was flabbergasted to learn that he is alive, married, and has a daughter.

Only one young woman in Ramallah kept Ahmad's secret, shielded him, and nurtured him all those years. She is Saha Barghuti. It is not known when they were married or what relationship bound them together and made it possible for them to endure the worst kind of social pain, juggling two separate lives—one overt and one covert.

In Ramallah, Saha was thought to be married to a Palestinian who was studying abroad. Whenever she was asked about the difficulties she had to endure whenever conditions permitted her to travel to meet her husband abroad, she would always say: "It is the occupation. Persevering in my marriage, even by correspondence, is defiance of that injustice."

Saha was telling a measure of truth, but the whole truth was something else entirely. She was secretive, even about her husband's name. When she conceived after a long stay in Europe for treatment, and after her daughter Hanin was born, the birth certificate listed the name of a different father from al-Safdi family. When Hanin learned to talk, she shared her parents' secret, and she never talked about "Papa" who lived with her in Ramallah. Alas, the secret was uncovered on 1 September when occupation forces entered her bedroom, threw her toys around, and led her father to prison.

Since the day he was arrested, Ahmad Qatamish's wife, Saha, and all of the rights organizations in the occupied territories have been contacting the International Red Cross, human rights committees, and Amnesty International to monitor his detention and the manner in which he is being interrogated. They fear for his life, especially because several youths have been martyred as a result of torture.

In view of the charges leveled against him by Israeli occupation authorities, Qatamish is being defended by a team of lawyers led by attorney Le'a Tzemel, who said:

"Ahmad Qatamish is being subjected to continuous torture and interrogation. He has been allowed to sleep two-and-a-half hours in the past 28 days. The device of his torture is the "Phantom" (where he is forced to sit on a very low chair with his hands and feet tied and his head covered with a sack, usually of burlap soaked in urine, causing extreme vision impairment, excruciating back pain, and severe headaches). Israeli authorities refuse to allow him to see a physician."

Tzemel added: "Ahmad has not answered his interrogators' questions so far. He merely denies the charges against him and says that he was not affiliated with any organization nor had any ties to any political entity."

Documents and Files

Israeli occupation authorities claim that hundreds, even thousands, of PFLP members will be arrested on the basis of PFLP documents and membership files found in the Qatamish home.

But when interviewed by AL-MAJALLAH Ahmad's wife, Saha, said: "I was with my daughter in the bedroom when the soldiers and intelligence agents forced their way into our apartment after the explosion we heard at the door. They prevented us from moving for two-and-a-half hours, during which time they thoroughly searched the house. Then they presented me with a document stating that they found nothing in the house but \$2,900 dollars and 800 Jordanian dinars. After I signed the document, they searched me and left. I found out later that my mother's house, which is only a kilometer away from mine, was simultaneously raided, but nobody was home. They searched it thoroughly, of course, but they found nothing. I took my daughter to my mother's house [after the raid] and have been living there since."

This is not the first time that a detainee has been accused of leading one political organization or another. Such charges usually fall apart during the trial process, but the case of Ahmad Qatamish is different. The Israelis admit openly that they have been hunting him unsuccessfully for 16 years while he was right under their noses, leading a near-normal life with his wife and daughter.

It is difficult at this stage of the investigation to uncover all the mysteries and oddities of the social and emotional lives led by Saha and Ahmad Qatamish for 16 years. Ahmad is still being subjected to intense and barbaric interrogation to learn the details of his life since his disappearance in 1976. Saha, meanwhile, is also being subjected to sporadic detention and interrogation to find out things about her, how she met Ahmad, who introduced them, when they got married, etc.

Saha related some of her travails to AL-MAJALLAH while at Red Cross headquarters to join dozens of Palestinian women in a 13-day hunger strike in support of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli jails. She said: "The last time I saw Ahmad was three weeks ago at a hearing that authorized his detention for 25 more days. His skin was sallow, and he appeared exhausted to the extreme. He could not see my hands and tried to feel out for them. I was not allowed to speak with him, but we communicated with our hands. I know he can bear up under torment and torture, but I remain worried about Mossad's threats to kill him. The image of his older brother, who was tortured into paralysis in 1976 and then was martyred 10 years later, is constantly before me. There is nothing to prevent Israeli Intelligence from doing the same thing to Ahmad. He [Ahmad] testified in court that one of his interrogators expressed regret that a mistake was made at the time of his arrest and that it would have been preferable to liquidate him then and kill him. Furthermore, one interrogator told me that Israeli Intelligence lives by its own laws. He even cursed the American consulate when he learned that my daughter Hanin is a U.S. national."

Hanin's Nationality

Asked the secret of Hanin's American nationality, she responded: "I had difficulty conceiving and giving birth, so I went to the United States for treatment. Hanin was born there and, consequently, entitled to U.S. citizenship."

She added: "It was very painful to see Ahmad in court this last time. I had gone to court accompanied by Umm-Muhammad, his mother, who had not seen him or heard news about him in 16 years. Ahmad was now allowed to speak with her, but [probably] could not have because of the torture he suffered. On seeing her, he held her hand and pressed it. She in turn threw herself on him tearfully, then fainted."

Saha paused to catch her breath and then wistfully and angrily added: "They direct their blows to Ahmad's upper vertebrae, and the authorities refuse to treat him or allow an Arab physician to see him. He, in turn, refuses treatment by the prison doctor, who only gives him sedatives."

On what transpired since her husband's arrest she said: "I was summoned for questioning three times and placed for 48 hours in a small cell at al-Maskubiyah prison. They questioned me about my relationship with Ahmad; about our friends, acquaintances, and relations; about our contacts abroad; and about my political role. My answer was always the same: 'Ahmad was not on a wanted list and no official summons was ever received. I am his wife, and this all I know.'"

She added: "The interrogators cannot prove the charges against him, and we demand his release. If he is not released, the family will demand a public trial attended by an international legal body in order to ward off the judgements based on false documentation."

But how did Ahmad, Saha, and Hanin live throughout those long years?

Said Saha: "Ahmad is in a class by himself. He is an introvert and likes to spend his time reading and writing literature and critiques."

Ahmad's Family

How about 4-year-old Hanin? How did she manage to keep the secret, and how is she reacting to her father's arrest?

Saha said: "Hanin has been a bright spot in a life of pain and suffering."

Asked whether Ahmad ever took Hanin outside and what she used to call him, Saha responded: "Very rarely. He used to take her on short picnics within the confines of the house. He treated her as a doting father would. Hanin has shown great capacity for discretion and courage. I have not seen her cry, not even once, since her father's arrest. She told me she was sure that Ahmad would be released from prison and that he would be walking her to kindergarten, the same as other fathers do."

What is to become of Hanin? "I do not know," Saha said. "She is recorded on my identify card as having been born

to another father. She is an American national, and I fear that they might take her away from Palestine."

To a question about Ahmad's family and her relationship with it before and after his arrest, she said: "I used to visit the family. I also used to see Ahmad's brother all the time, because both of us were members of the folkloric society. Khalid (Ahmad's brother) loves Hanin, and she loves him a lot. However, for reasons unknown to me, Ahmad never visited his family, not even once. I visited the family after Ahmad's arrest. The relatives were thrilled about Hanin, but they are deeply worried about their son's life."

Ahmad's mother, Umm-Muhammad, who is in her 70's, said: "We had not seen Ahmad in 16 years. Ahmad is still alive, and Hanin is now the most precious thing in our lives."

She choked with tears before adding: "I am extremely fearful and worried for his life. I counted the seconds until I was allowed to see him at the courthouse. I embraced him and cried on his chest, but I fear I may lose him as I lost his brother. The occupiers heed nothing and nobody—not America, not the Arabs, and not peace."

Report Shows Prisons as Intifadah Training Camps

93AE0083A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
15 Oct 92 p 15

[Article by Nawwaf al-Zaru, occupied homeland affairs editor: "Palestinian Daily Life in Occupation Detention Camps; Epic of Struggle Has Polished and Graduated Creators of Palestinian Future"]

[Excerpts] Under the umbrella of the Israeli empire—the alleged oasis of democracy—and under various pretexts, fraudulent laws, and arguments of security, order, and self-defense in the face of the Palestinian threat to the Zionist state, the occupation authorities have erected repressive prisons and detention camps. There are now more than 25 of them. The latest and most oppressive, terrorizing, and collectively repressing are the camps that the forces of the occupation army have built since the outbreak of the glorious Palestinian intifadah in the occupied territories. The most important of them are Ansar-3 in the Negev, Ansar-2 in the Gaza Strip, and al-Zahiriyyah in Hebron. These are in addition to the bastilles of terrorism and repression in Ashqelon, Nafhah, Beersheba, and elsewhere. [passage omitted]

The number of Palestinian citizens—men, children, and women—whom the authorities have thrown into the gloomy citadels of repression, oppression, and terror in the course of the past years of the intifadah exceeds 120,000. [passage omitted]

Strikes

Before the continued strike that is going on now, Palestinian militants in occupation detention camps embarked on dozens of short and long hunger strikes to protest the policy of inhuman systematic torture against detainees.

For example (this is not an exhaustive list), some of the most important strikes by Palestinian militants since 1967 are:

- the Ramallah Prison strike at the beginning of the second half of 1968.
- the Bayt Lid Detention Camp strike in 1972 and the beginning of 1973.
- the famous Ashqelon strike on 11 December 1976. This was the longest collective strike by Palestinian militants in the history of Palestine, and perhaps in the history of the world's liberation movements. It lasted 45 days in its first phase. One month later came the second strike, which exceeded 41 days at its maximum. This historic strike dismayed the Israeli authorities and aroused Palestinian and Arab public opinion, as well as some international public opinion and even some Israeli sectors, particularly after a number of martyrs among the detainees succumbed during it.
- the famous Nafhah strike in 1980.
- many consecutive strikes that heroes of the intifadah have carried out in these detention camps.

In addition, dozens of short strikes ranging, from a single day to 10 days, have been carried out at various occupation detention camps.

Detainees, Political Achievements

All the devious goals and dimensions behind the policy and plots of the detention camp authorities certainly have not been hidden to the militant Palestinian vanguard in the detention camps of the Israeli occupation. Indeed, this vanguard has realized the need for imprisoned fighters to adapt themselves to their new circumstances and reorganize their ranks in order to embark on a new, lengthy experience of struggle. Palestinian militants in Israeli prisons have set one strategic goal, to which they all have agreed to and toward which they all have worked to realize despite harsh suffering and sacrifices. This goal centers on the need to maintain their national identity, their national affiliation, their national meaning, their militant symbols, and their position as vanguard of the Palestinian people in its historic struggle with the Zionist authorities. They have been able to do this by means of the following two achievements:

First, achieving Palestinian national unity inside the walls of the Zionist citadels of oppression. They have achieved unity of position in struggling and responding to the schemes and measures of the authorities of the occupation prisons. This unity truly has become manifest in resistance positions that express challenge and in legendary strikes from food, drink, or work in order to bring about the imposition of less repressive living, educational, and cultural conditions by demanding rights to proper food, clothing, and books, the practice of religious rites, and the maintenance of militancy through practicing the slogan, "Yes to hunger; no to bowing! Yes to thirst; no to oppression! Yes to prison cells; no to submissiveness!"

Second, arming oneself with the weapon of militant knowledge, culture, and education inside the detention camps.

Palestinian militants have decided to turn the camps and citadels from the "living graves" the Israelis intended into revolutionary national schools and universities for the sons of the Palestinian people, so as to polish and graduate all the detainees as politically conscious, nationalistically educated militants armed with resolution and determination to continue the struggle, lead the resistance movement, and confront the occupation authorities. The cornerstone of nationalist education has been to know the nature of the Israeli state and understand its strategy, its goals, and how to deal with it and confront it.

The occupation authorities have realized the dangers of the transformation of their repressive prisons into schools of militancy. Therefore they have turned to developing measures to strip Palestinian prisoners of their unity, empty them of their nationalism, and limit their consciousness and education; but the great majority of these attempts have shipwrecked on the rock of unity, consciousness, and determination to stand fast in the face of a challenge that has lasted for many years and still continues. Helping the fedayeen in their efforts have been the "prisoner exchange" deals between the Palestinian revolution and the Zionist ruling authorities. In this framework, these authorities have been forced to release from their prisons over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, most of whom have had the good fortune to remain in the occupied homeland. These deals have been a cruel blow to Zionist morale and a tremendous boost to the morale of Palestinians in the occupied territory, who have become more and more proud of their freed militant sons.

The detention terms of Palestinian militants, no matter how long, have been a transitional phase or stage which they have had to utilize to hone themselves in preparation for their coming role in continuing the struggle against the occupation. Many reports and information coming from the occupied homeland and UN sources confirm that no fewer than half a million Palestinians have experienced internment, torture, and maltreatment at the hands of the occupation authorities for varying periods during which they have acquired militant experience and political consciousness that have served to deepen their attachment to their nationalism and their determination to continue political and militant activities against the occupation. Israeli security sources also have confirmed that the prisoner exchange deals that have led to the release of hundreds of militants and vanguard forces and their return to their homes in all the cities, villages, and camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have played an effective role in the militant moves of the Palestinian people; for released detainees generally have been in the forefront of every subsequent militant protest move. The occupation authorities therefore have taken to rearresting most of those released, especially since the outbreak of the popular intifadah in the West Bank and Gaza. These former detainees have found themselves in the midst of thousands of Palestinians who are in the forefront of the intifadah and who are willing to be its fuel, after the Israeli authorities embarked on committing heinous crimes, killing, besieging, starving, and launching campaigns of mass maltreatment and arrest. These authorities have not understood the fact that the more numerous their repressive detention camps become and the more Palestinian prisoners there are, the more schools, or rather universities

of struggle there are and the more graduates of them, who in turn will fan the fires of the intifadah. [passage omitted]

The process of building up and polishing all Palestinian militants politically, organizationally, intellectually, and educationally begins with the first stages of detention. This stage of their life usually has formed a transition phase that has required them to educate, develop, or polish themselves in preparation for continuing the future fight against the occupation. David Peri, the former warden of Israel's Ramla prison, confirmed this fact in a book he published under the title *Ramla Diary*. He speaks as follows about the internal life of the Palestinian detainees: "The Palestinian political detainees study in two directions. First, they study about themselves; then they study about Israel. Each of these two directions has its own methods." The newspaper DAVAR corroborated this in a commentary that said: "The Palestinian political prisoner who enters an Israeli prison or detention camp ignorant or undistinguished comes out polished and equipped with all the weapons and tools needed for real influence. He understands what he will confront in the course of his struggle." Many Israeli sources have commented similarly. Knesset member Gadi Yatziv published an important article in the Israeli newspaper 'AL HAMISHMAR, saying: "The children of the stones whom Israel now is throwing into its detention camps are tomorrow's hand grenade and machine gun heroes—the creators of the future and a bright tomorrow." [passage omitted]

Update on Infrastructure Planning, Committees

93AE0104B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
10 Nov 92 p 6

[Article by Raba al-Hasari in Jerusalem: "Palestinians Preparing for Power Transfer With Studies for Founding Institutions and Training Cadres"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted]

The process of establishing the first Palestinian bank in the occupied West Bank has reached the stage of negotiating a working plan with the Israeli Central Bank now that the 13 shareholders have obtained the approval of the military authorities.

"There is a need for a Palestinian bank in the occupied territories," said Jid'un Suhayl, a businessman from Ramallah, which will serve as the headquarters of the principal bank, "to fill the vacuum left by the closing of all the Israeli bank branches since the onset of the intifadah, and the meager services offered by the Jordanian Cairo-Amman Bank," which the authorities allowed to reopen in 1986 after a closure that had lasted since the beginning of the Israeli occupation. No Palestinian banks had been founded in the West Bank or Gaza before the occupation, with the exception of a Palestinian bank in the Gaza Strip that was recently reopened.

The young shareholder, who manages a computer firm, expects that the new bank, which has been named the Palestinian Commercial Bank, Ltd., will open its doors in mid-May of next year. He anticipates that subscription for

shares worth 7.6 million Jordanian dinars, to complete the bank's 10 million dinar capital, will begin within a month of its opening.

Suhayl Jid'un said that he applied to the Israeli authorities to open a commercial bank in 1987, before the start of the intifadah, but his application was not approved. He resubmitted the same application at the beginning of this year, and won the approval of the authorities. He added, "Of course, the current negotiations and autonomy plan Israel has proposed played a part in its consent to grant us the license."

Those supporting the bank hope to realize profits from taking deposits and granting loans to commercial and industrial projects, and opening credits to fund them. Because of the lack of high-level banking experience, largely unavailable in the occupied territories, the bank supporters have placed advertisements in newspapers published abroad to attract experienced Palestinians from the Arab countries. "So far," Suhayl Jid'un said, "there are three nominees for the position of bank manager who have previously held that job in Kuwaiti banks."

The Need for Banks

In the technical committee specializing in the economy, Palestinian economists are studying the occupied territories' need for banks. One, Samir Halilah, who at the same time directs the Economic Development Group (a loan institution), said that the West Bank and Gaza Strip need no more than two or three local commercial banks in addition to the branches of non-Palestinian banks. He emphasizes that the occupied territories' need is mainly for investment and development banks.

One of the Economic Committees' eight subcommittees is studying plans to set up a Palestinian port on the Mediterranean Sea and regional airports in the northern and central West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Halilah said that the Gaza port project came up in the multilateral talks, but most likely it would be postponed in the current absence of any competent authority in the Gaza Strip. The airports project revolves around revitalizing local airport in the cities of Gaza and Jericho that existed before the occupation and making plans for two more airports in the cities of Janin (in the northern West Bank) and the Jabal al-Mukabar area of east Jerusalem, in addition to Qalandiyah Airport north of Jerusalem, which is currently used for Israeli military purposes or domestic flights.

Halilah said that the Israelis considered these projects premature, "but they are unable to obstruct them, because we need channels through which to bring Muslim pilgrims in the Arab world and to encourage tourism, which is expected to be a primary source of our future income."

The Palestinians hope for the West Bank to regain the status it had in the Arab world with tourists until the Israeli occupation. Ramallah, with its hotels, was one of the summer resorts to which vacationers came from many Arab countries, while Jericho was an important winter retreat for visitors from neighboring countries.

Among the future projects upon which work is expected to begin within a few months are the renovation of two hotels on the beach at Gaza and restaurants along the Palestinian coast accessible to the Palestinians, in addition to establishing a network of tour agencies linked by computers in the city of Gaza, a service the Gaza Strip has lacked so far, but seen as indispensable to promoting tourism.

Halilah is waiting for the work to be completed next summer to establish a new hotel and a garden restaurant, the first of its kind in the northern West Bank. As to the al-Fara'ah and al-Badan region east of Nablus, and the Janin area, the Palestinians hope to transform them into something resembling the Lebanese city of Zahlah. Work has begun on preparing them, to benefit from their valleys, brooks, and hot mineral springs.

Samir Halilah says that the most important potential tourists are the Palestinians who live throughout the world and who come to the occupied territories every summer to visit their families, who have capital to invest in profitable projects, having invested so far in construction. He adds that the period following the Gulf war and the start of the Arab-Israeli negotiations witnessed the arrival of thousands of Palestinians to visit, or to stay, for those who still had the right of residence in the occupied territories. "The Palestinians of the Arab countries and the Gulf region," he continues, "are our new hope" for restoring some of its old glory to what is left of Palestine.

The European Community has supported several tourism projects so far, by granting loans to investment projects for commercial ends. It is expected that restoration projects for the old cities of Nablus and Hebron (in addition to Jerusalem's special case), archaeological sites such as the Sibastiyah area (in the northern West Bank), and Solomon's Pools (near Bethlehem), will get attention for touristic purposes.

Teaching

In the meantime, the council for education and the Supreme Education Council are preparing scenarios for developing the educational system, and improving it, should the current situation continue, and plan to produce a Palestinian teaching curriculum should the current negotiations lead to the existence of a "Palestinian entity or independent state," in the words of Ahmad Musa, council vice president.

The teaching process in the occupied territories is based on the application of two different systems, an Egyptian one in the Gaza Strip and a Jordanian one in the West Bank, passed down from the long period preceding the Israeli occupation.

Musa, who is also an employee of the the UN Palestinian Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and responsible for the Agency's schools, believes in "adding the Palestinian

dimension to the teaching curriculum in two fundamental areas, history and geography." Government, private, and UNRWA schools submit to Israeli censorship as relates to the teaching of those two subjects.

Musa said, "In the event a Palestinian authority should take the place of the Israeli authority, it will have problems implementing its plans as long as the infrastructure is not there." For the first time, this year, 750 teachers from government schools were added to the university program for retraining, with funding from the European Economic Community. "After 25 years with no ongoing training," Musa said, "there is still much left to do in the area of preparing high school teachers."

In a distant but no less important area, veteran and beginning Palestinian journalists are readying themselves to be "the nucleus of Palestinian television" in the future, despite the refusal of the Israeli authorities so far to grant a Palestinian broadcast license. The Palestinian television medium enjoys the attention of numerous European countries, but the German Greens Party was the precursor, sending in a team to train a group of interested young men and women and donating the first professional photography, sound, lighting, and editing equipment as part of the first training program organized by the League of Palestinian Journalists in the Occupied Territories, which lasted three months.

Journalist Da'ud Kuttub, one of those active in the field of preparing the nucleus of Palestinian television, said that "our nightmare is to find ourselves someday with the chance of establishing the first Palestinian television station and having to use Israeli crews." He added, "The question of getting licensing from the Israeli authorities does not worry us as much as training crews capable of high-quality work."

Among the plans submitted to the technical committee dealing with the media are, in addition to laying down a Palestinian media policy, turning electrical engineers with university degrees into sound, light, and editing engineers and engineers in all the electrical fields relevant to radio and television.

Here, too, the idea of summoning experienced Palestinians from the Arab countries comes up: individuals who have worked in these fields and who still have the right of residence in the occupied territories would manage Palestinian radio and television broadcasting because of the shortage of experts in the field in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestinians acknowledge that the major challenge they face is that, in order for their plans and projects to succeed, they will have to wait for a phased agreement, which could take several years or perhaps a few months. It depends upon the Israeli administration and the "good faith" of Israeli quarters.

Arab Technical Studies on Gaza Railroad Begin
93P40058A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
7 Nov 92 p 6

[Excerpts] Cairo—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Arab technical studies on reextending the railroad line in the occupied Gaza Strip have begun. This comes within the context of serious preparations at the Arab level to begin the transitional stage of autonomy for the Palestinian people. Studies that are now being conducted come under the framework of the effort to start setting up a comprehensive transportation network between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the Arab countries.

Arab sources in Cairo indicated that Arab capitals have begun to consider providing financing for the lines that connect the two areas and the neighboring Arab countries. [passage omitted]

Informed Arab sources asserted that the invariables of the Arab position stress their rejection of any Israeli attempts to normalize economic relations or communications activity with the Arab countries before the signing of peace accords. [passage omitted]

EC Financing Expected To Cover 120,000 Apartments

93AE0088A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
3 Nov 92 p 13

[Report from Brussels by Nur-al-Din al-Furaydi: "European Mission To Shortly Disburse One-Fourth of Grant To Construct Residential Units in Occupied Territories"]

[Excerpts] The European Commission is expected to disburse within the next six weeks one-fourth of a European Community [EC] grant to the Palestinian Housing Council to fund a housing program in the occupied territories. The grant, in the amount of 29 million ECU's [European Currency Units] (\$36.5 million), will finance some 120,000 residential units, or no more than 1 percent of the region's housing needs.

Officials of the Palestinian Housing Council met last week with officials of the European Commission and with officials of the Belgian and French Ministries of Housing, to discuss the timetable for receiving the funds and the mechanics of this EC-funded program. They also discussed ways of learning from the experiences of the two countries in the housing sector. It is to be noted that the EC is the only international body that has offered grants to alleviate the acute housing crisis in the occupied territories.

In an exclusive interview with AL-HAYAH, Palestinian Housing Council Chairman Ibrahim Sha'ban beseeched Palestinian businessmen and other Arab organizations to heed the housing crisis in the occupied territories and to deal with it as a fundamental problem related to the territorial issue.

He said that by the middle of January the European Commission will disburse the first installment of the grant, which will amount to one-fourth of the total. The housing

grant is part of a special grant of 60 million ECU's (about \$75.6 million) approved by the EC in the spring of 1990 during the Gulf crisis.

The European grant will make it possible to build 120,000 low-income apartments. Each apartment will have an area of 120 square meters and will cost about \$30,000.

Lauding the European initiative as unique in the region, Sha'ban said that the European grant barely covers 1 percent [as published] of housing needs in the occupied territories. Experts put that need at between 180,000 and 200,000 units [as published].

The Palestinian Housing Council was created in August of last year to implement the EC-funded housing program. The council is composed of individuals from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and is headquartered in occupied Jerusalem.

Sha'ban said that council offices in Nabulus, al-Khalil, Gaza, and Jerusalem distributed applications on the 10th of last month to those wishing to benefit by the housing program. The applications will be reviewed by social workers.

After the European funds are transferred to the Bank of Palestine in Gaza, the council's next expected step is to buy lots in Gaza and West Bank towns. This is to be followed by inviting bids for architectural design. The project's fourth stage will be to invite contractors to bid for the construction. The entire project is expected to be completed by 1994.

The European grant is to be distributed in the form of no-interest concessionary loans that are repayable over 20 to 25 years. This format is intended to create a financing cycle that may make it possible to fund other programs. Implementation of the pilot program is expected to create hundreds of jobs in the construction sector.

Sha'ban emphasized that the housing shortage has become acute because of neglect during decades of Israeli occupation, which forbade, and still forbids, the creation of a housing organization or a mortgage bank and which confiscates Palestinian lands for use by settlements even though "that land is essential for solving the housing crisis."

He mentioned that the occupation administration has imposed some 3,000 military edicts, including a prohibition on acquiring land for development, making it impossible to purchase any lot, no matter of what size, for residential building. Military orders forbid any construction along main streets that are 150 meters wide, resulting in the confiscation of thousands of dunams that are suitable for construction. [passage omitted]

Sha'ban explained that the Israeli occupation bears primary responsibility for aggravating the crisis. It has, for instance, forbidden renovation in Arab Jerusalem since the day it was occupied in 1967. This means that there are no plans or building permits. In addition, permit costs average \$30,000, almost as much as the cost of building a low-income apartment. [passage omitted]

Construction is permitted in other Arab towns, but the crisis has remained acute because the occupation administration refuses to expand municipal land areas, thereby contributing directly to the escalation of land prices to astronomical levels, especially in relation to the incomes of farmers, workers, and those who receive low wages. Therefore, the crisis has worsened and there has been a pent-up demand for housing over the years. That demand has now risen to some 80,000 units, which would cost about \$4 million [as published].

Implementation of the EC-funded housing program also brings up another acute problem which Sha'ban was unable to address. This has to do with the resources needed to import building materials for the 120,000 residential apartments. It is common knowledge that the occupation administration has kept the Palestinian market tied to the products of Israeli industry by prohibiting Palestinian enterprises from directly importing from European and Arab markets even though it has acceded since 1988 to an EC resolution to open the European market to Palestinian exports. [passage omitted]

EGYPT

Mubarak's Economic Policy Reviewed

93AF0217C Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
28 Oct 92 p 5

[Article by Essam Rifaat: "Waking Up to Economic Reality"; boldface words as published]

[Text] Essam Rifaat, editor-in-chief of AL-AHRAM AL-IQTISADI economic weekly outlines the principles of Egypt's economic policy under Mubarak and suggests some further steps.

The economy has become a topic of daily conversation. It affects every aspect of our life. It is no wonder, therefore, that Egypt's political leadership placed economy at the top of its agenda. The economic conference convened by Hosni Mubarak in February 1982 gave tangible evidence of the president's attention to economic policy. The major components of Mubarak's economic policy could be summed up as follows:

1. Re-planning, which under Mubarak excludes rigidity and encourages flexibility and the participation of all economic forces toward achieving development.
2. A deregulation that focuses on promoting production not consumption.
3. Safeguarding social harmony and guaranteeing the well being of limited income sectors of the society, who represent for Mubarak, the standard by which a policy may be adopted or rejected.
4. Persistent effort at home and abroad to solve Egypt's economic problems through the development of an integrated economic policy combining a number of strategies that will ultimately bring about economic reform and restore balance to Egypt's economy.

Egypt's economic policy under Mubarak is in essence, therefore, a package of diverse policies aiming at reform. However, there are those who, intentionally or not, ignore the full scope of this policy. For example, a recent television talk show discussed the deregulation of imports and the effect on local industry. The programme hosted a major journalist who rejected this deregulation on the grounds that it will permit the West to take the "cream" while leaving poor quality goods for us. The writer's argument is a gross over-simplification and contrary to economic logic. Not only that, but such an attitude—with all due respect for freedom of expression—favours those manufacturers who want to retain a monopoly in the Egyptian market and overlooks the view of a large segment of businessmen, industrialists and enlightened private sector investors represented in numerous business associations.

Nevertheless, there are still some questions concerning the logic of the deregulation of imports that must be asked, in the interest of sound economic practice. These are:

1. Why should imports be banned?
2. How long should the ban last?
3. What are the dangers of lifting the bans on imports?
4. Are there alternative ways of protecting Egyptian industries?

These are fair and reasonable questions. However, to provide a reasonable answer, we must first develop a fuller picture of Mubarak's integrated economic reform policy. Firstly, the term integrated implies a cohesive, coordinated body of strategies to avoid conflicting decisions. It also implies a multi-faceted programme of diverse monetary, financial and economic policies. The financial aspect for example includes deregulating interest rates, credit ceilings, sales taxes. The monetary aspect includes establishing a free banking system and deregulating currency exchange rates. Economic policies include promoting the private sector, lifting restrictions on exports, introducing legislation for the stock market, amending the banking laws, developing new industrial zones and lifting restrictions on imports.

Returning to the questions revolving around lifting restrictions on imports, I remind the reader of an interview with Dr Yusri Mustafa, the Minister of Economy, in which he said that the liberalisation of foreign trade and lifting the bans on imports is not a new policy, but rather one that began in May 1989. The Minister then cited some interesting figures. Out of a total volume of production worth LE22 billion, only LE7.8 billion or 35 per cent of this was derived from products protected by bans on imports. The figures make it explicit that the dreams of protecting our produce by imposing import bans can not last forever and it is time for those who have lived with those dreams in the past to wake up to reality. The private sector must now engage in the battle to accommodate to a liberalised economy. It must face an increasingly diversified economy and the opening up of foreign trade and in particular opening the door to foreign imports. However, years of protectionism have left the private sector companies at a disadvantage. Living under the illusion that protective bans

will last forever, they have not updated or strengthened their administrative and productive structures to enable them to compete as the economy progressed steadily toward liberalisation. Now they are at grave peril if they do not improve the quality of their products and reduce production costs.

Egyptian companies are thus at a very difficult turning point and one must ask whether in this transitional phase it is possible to protect national production while deregulating imports. Both are equally important, but neither should suffer at the expense of the other. There are however some means that could reduce the risk of local companies. These are:

1. Adopting measures against countries that engage in economic practices harmful to the Egyptian economy such as flooding the Egyptian market with subsidised products.
2. Introducing price guidelines at customs to combat the falsification of receipts that some importers use to escape customs duties so that they can introduce their products into Egypt at lower prices.
3. Giving preference to Egyptian products in all public tenders.
4. Restructuring the inverted pyramid of customs duties on imported products in favour of those needed for production.

Above all, however, quality is the best means to protect Egyptian products. Improved quality at reduced costs will give Egyptian products the competitive edge over their foreign counterparts.

Islamist Victory in Lawyers Union Analyzed

93AF0103A Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic
21 Sep 92 pp 8-9

[Article by Ibrahim Khalil and Usama Salama]

[Text] Baha'-al-Din 'Abd-al-Rahman, a member of the new Lawyers Union, contacted Hasan 'Abd-al-Tawwab at the 'Abd-al-Tawwab's office during vote counting and told him "Can you imagine! We are going to win."

Primary results showed that all of the candidates on the Muslim Brotherhood list were going to win, which took everybody by surprise, even the Muslim Brotherhood. A member of the Muslim Brotherhood is quoted as saying: "If we knew that this would happen, we would have contested the union presidency."

At Kafr-al-Shaykh, when Ahmad al-Khawajah was elected as union president, the Muslim Brotherhood delegate said: "We are not looking for more than three seats". Perhaps, al-Khawajah himself was under the same impression just one week before the elections when he refused a demand from the Muslim Brotherhood to include four names on his list: Mukhtar Nuh; Sayf-al-Islam Hasan al-Banna, from the Cairo Appeals Court; Khalid Badawi; and Jalal Sa'd, to contest for two junior seats. Al-Khawajah gave the Muslim Brotherhood only two places on his list. This was considered to be an indication of the election results that the union president expected.

Analysis and information that was released after the election results indicated that there was strong proof that al-Khawajah, in reality, was allied with the Brotherhood, both because he had predicted that they would win and because he needed to be the union president in order to strike a blow against the temporary committee, which was headed by Dr. Muhammad 'Asfur.

In another way, the Muslim Brotherhood found in al-Khawajah a suitable personality that would allow them to repeat the scenario that they had previously pursued, which gave them control of both the Engineers and the Medical Profession Unions. This was the case because al-Khawajah was a person with many connections. He has a good relationship with both the National [Watani] Party and the government, and he could be of use to the Muslim Brotherhood with regard to facilitating some services that would help them.

Those who favor this opinion explain this alliance by looking at two issues. The first relates to the fact that al-Khawajah did not attack the Brotherhood at all during the election campaigns. The second relates to the incident that occurred at 1400 Friday afternoon. There were indications that 'Uthman Zaza was ahead of al-Khawajah. At this point, the Muslim Brotherhood operations office contacted the governorates and gave them strict orders to support al-Khawajah very strongly so that he would win.

The Muslim Brotherhood got the idea of following events at the Lawyers Union on 19 January 1990, when divisions in the union surfaced. At this point, the general assembly held a meeting and gave the union council a vote of no confidence vote. Accordingly, the Muslim Brotherhood Guidance Office decided to establish an operations office headed by the lawyer Jamal Taj-al-Din, with Mukhtar Nuh and 'Abdallah Salim as members.

This operations office started planning for the elections a long time in advance. It formed a special committee in every subsidiary union to get in touch with lawyers and offer them free services. Health care facilities were offered in collaboration with the Medical Profession Union. At that same time, seminars were held that comprised speeches against the union council in order to create a strong anticouncil feeling.

A long time back, it became clear that the Muslim Brotherhood had prepared a list of nine persons to maneuver with. They eventually got four of their members on the union council, in preparation to get a majority in the next elections.

However, the plan was changed in the last few days, and the names of Yusuf Kamal, the Labor Party candidate, and 'Abdallah Salim, an old Muslim Brotherhood member, were added to the list. This was done when there were strong indications that the Muslim Brotherhood could win, especially because they had started a strong campaign to pay subscriptions for thousands of lawyers who belonged or sympathized with them. There were then enough votes to shift the balance in favor of the Brotherhood winning the elections, which were held the Friday before last.

Thursday

What the Muslim Brotherhood did on the Thursday before the elections was very effective and strongly influenced the

turn of events. Information was relayed that they held many agreements that strongly affected voting the next day.

First they agreed with 'Uthman Zaza—the candidate nominated for the office of president—to exchange votes. Prior to this, a meeting had been held between Ahmad Qinaawi, Ahmad Kilani, and Muhammad Hamdan, who were siding with the temporary committee, which was headed by Dr. Muhammad 'Asfur and Mukhtar Nuh, when there was a preliminary agreement for the Ikhwan to vote for 'Uthman Zaza and Bushra 'Asfur.

The goal of this agreement had been to lead to both al-Khawajah's and Sabri Mubdi's failure. However, it was only partially executed in favor of 'Uthman Zaza and totally executed in favor of Bushra 'Asfur. As a compensation for that, the Muslim Brotherhood got the votes of all of the members of the temporary committee, as well as those of 'Uthman Zaza's supporters.

On that same Thursday, the Muslim Brotherhood made another agreement with Muhammad al-Mahdi, former president of the Lawyers Union al-Jizah. According to this agreement, the name of Ahmad Mahir, the Cairo University candidate, was added to the Muslim Brotherhood list. Consequently, the Muslim Brotherhood received all of Mahir's supporters' votes, both in al-Jizah and the different universities.

The third agreement led to the addition of the name of Ra'fat Sayf, Tanta Appeals Court candidate, to the Muslim Brotherhood list—although he did not belong to them. This was done in order to cause the failure of Jalal Rajab, who was to split votes with Ibrahim al-'Abd, a strong candidate whom the Muslim Brotherhood refused to nominate on their list because he was too close to al-Khawajah.

This was what also happened with regard to the al-Mansurah Appeals Court, when the Muslim Brotherhood supported 'Akif Jad, a member of the National Party, and made telephone calls to all of the governorates in order to give him votes, even though he had not been put on the Muslim Brotherhood list because the agreement had been made at such a late date.

Union Computer

Yet, these agreements were not enough to give the Muslim Brotherhood list this landslide victory. So, what happened?

Sayd Abu-Zayd, member of the Coalition Party and campaign director for Ahmad Nabil Al-Hilali said, quoting a Muslim Brotherhood member, that the Muslim Brotherhood spent 2 million pounds on the election campaign. Some of this money went in paying for lawyers' subscriptions, which had been due for years, in order to gain their votes.

In this fashion, the Muslim Brotherhood exploited information that they acquired through the Lawyers Union computer. By analyzing this information, the Muslim Brotherhood learned that there were hundreds of youth who were members of the Lawyers Union, yet they did not

work as lawyers. Nevertheless, they paid subscriptions for those also, in order to make sure that they would support them. The Muslim Brotherhood also gave material aid to poor, unemployed lawyers. At the same time, they promised to help them, either by giving them some court cases to work on or by giving them aid from the union's money.

An old union member ascertained that the Muslim Brotherhood managed to assemble their supporters and other lawyers who did not belong to them, and even some who had other affiliations, by using air-conditioned buses for transporting the electorate from their homes to election sites. Inside those buses, everyone would place his hand on the Koran and swear that he would vote for all those on the Muslim Brotherhood list.

At every election site, there was a special tent where tea, coffee, and soft drinks, as well as lunch, were served. In addition, there was special clothing that carried some campaign slogans. Small amplifiers were also reciting slogans around the election sites. All these might have been small arrangements, yet, they had a great impact on election day!

This lawyer said that clearly the Muslim Brotherhood had been preparing for the elections for a long time, during which period they registered the names of lawyers who belonged to them on electorate lists, paid their subscriptions, and loaned these lawyers money to start their law practices.

There are many more factors that helped the Muslim Brotherhood win. Mamduh Tammam, a former council member, said that there were divisions in the former council and each faction wanted to win the biggest number of votes so that it could control the council. This division led to the existence of more than one list, and each list did not include any names from other lists.

In addition, there were even differences among persons belonging to the same faction. It is found that most parties had more than one list. This was the case of the Nasirites, the leftists, the Wafd and the Coalition. "We were faced with four different lists for the leftists, and votes were scattered, while the Muslim Brotherhood went into the campaign with one list and kept to the one list until the end."

The Muslim Brotherhood also succeeded in assembling their supporters, who went to cast their votes, while other parties could not do the same.

This proves that the other parties did not control their electorate well. For example, in al-Jizah, Samih 'Ashur was astonished to find that 13 of those who supported him voted for him alone, and not for anyone else, which caused their votes to be declared null.

Coptic Laziness

Copts did not turn up on election day. Lawyer Mamduh Ramzi said that it was thought that about 4,900 lawyers should have turned voted. Letters were sent to them, and buses were prepared to transport them to the election site,

yet, no more than 624 voted, which is the lowest number of votes that any Copt received.

Had 2,000 Coptic lawyers turned up, this would have been enough to enable three Copts to win. Had 500 more gone, this would have been enough to put Fahmy Nashid on the council. Nashid was only 350 votes short of any of the newly elected members.

Yet, has the Muslim Brotherhood achieved a great victory? Samih 'Ashur, a council member who won in the last elections, said: "The number of votes that the Muslim Brotherhood nominees obtained were not big. They conformed with what winning candidates usually receive. As for Sayf-al-Islam's winning first place with 6,892 votes, it is nothing extraordinary. In the previous elections, we received the same percentage of votes. In fact, what permitted the Muslim Brotherhood to win was the divisions in the council, especially from the time that the union members began to fight, which made it more difficult for anyone to win. They also came up with separate lists, which was one of the reasons that I could not get the votes that 'Ismat al-Hawari, Sabri Mubdi, and Ahmad al-Khawajah received."

'Ismat al-Hawari, a member of the council since the last elections, asserts that the results do not reflect completely the will of the lawyers because at least half of the electorate should have voted. The number of members who actually voted in these elections did not exceed 10 percent, which helped the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood succeeded in cleaning their ranks and assembling their supporters, while other political streams failed to do that.

However, as we were following the results and indications of elections during the last few days, we found some very effective factors that contributed to the Muslim Brotherhood's victory, as a large number of lawyers have pointed out:

- The National Party has disappeared. Negative behavior has been repeated, which reminds us of the same conflict that happened between the National Party nominees during the Medical Profession Union's elections.
- The Wafd Party was responsible for accelerating the conflict between union members Ahmad al-Khawajah, Ahmad Nasir, 'Uthman Zaza, and Muhammad Fahim, which led to the configuration of the old council, while not presenting any alternative, giving the Muslim Brotherhood the chance to be the only one.
- The responsibility of the leftists, along with the Nasrite and Coalition factions, for the many conflicting lists that appeared. These lists had been preceded by many struggles.

However, the problem now does not seem to be "how the Muslim Brotherhood won," but "what are they going to do?"

It is too early to give an answer, but differences have started. The meeting that had been scheduled for last

Thursday in order to name the council officers has been postponed because al-Khawajah tried, through direct negotiation with the Muslim Brotherhood Guidance Office, to bring back Sabri Mubdi as the union secretary. Yet, the Muslim Brotherhood insists that the office of union secretary should only be held by one of them.

Islamic Alliance in Governorate Elections

93AF0108A Amman AL-LIWA' in Arabic
14 Oct 92 p 33

[Article: "Polls and Reports Confirm Islamic Alliance Sweep in Egypt; Ruling Party Retreats Before Islamic Alliance in Most Governorates"]

[Text] An evaluation committee of Egypt's ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) has prepared a memorandum indicating that successes by Islamists in a number of neighboring countries have led to an increase in support for in Egyptian public opinion.

The memorandum states that the Islamic current could wipe out all the gains and achievements that the ruling party's government has realized in past years.

The memorandum adds that the Islamic current, with its organizational skill, has been able to dominate the loyalties of many citizens. Based on information available from secret polls in Egypt, it found that 12 villages and hamlets in al-Daqahliyah Governorate alone would vote for the Islamic alliance, while the ruling NDP would win only seven villages. In al-Sharqiyah Governorate, the Islamic alliance would win the loyalty of 16 villages. The situation was similar in all of the Egyptian governorates.

Similarly, information that the Egyptian journal UKTUBAR published in its issue of the ninth of this month shows that the ruling party is planning for the result of the referendum on granting the president a third term to come out at more than 95 percent. NDP leaders consider this percentage the minimum that they can accept. They believe that it will be very difficult to accomplish, given the fact that members of the opposition dominate the seats of the local councils.

The information adds that the ruling party's review of its local election plans was also connected to the Islamic alliance's success in the professional union elections. A report prepared by a circle close to the ruling party linked the outcome of the union elections to possible results in the local elections.

In a related matter, a study by the ethics committee deals with the rise of the Islamic current in neighboring Islamic countries. It indicates that about 7,400 people of those included in the study stressed that they were strongly affected by the Islamic experiment in Algeria. About 6,250 proclaimed their rejection of the stifling of this experiment, deeming that the West had worked to stifle it in order to kill Islam in Algeria. They believe that the Islamic experiment in Egypt must be strong enough to fight off all foreign conspiracies.

In this regard, 7,843 of the Egyptian citizens included in the poll believed that throughout history Egypt had been

the principal barrier to crush conspiracies and plots against the Islamic nation. Because the United States and some Arab countries see Islam as their primary enemy, the Islamic current in Egypt must carry the torch and advance to defend Islam. Its success in any elections—union, parliamentary, or local—must be assured in Egypt. They will work for the victory of Islamic alliance candidates with the intention of giving them the strength to confront foreign conspiracies.

The study indicates that participants in the survey were asked whether the NDP government, without participation by the Islamists, had the strength to deal with foreign conspiracies against Islam. A total of 4,315 citizens replied negatively. They stated that the economic problem had exhausted the government, which did not want to embark on any political struggle with the major countries. It had become utterly subservient to implementing any policy of the major countries in the region, having become desperately in need of economic aid. However, the Islamists reject the West's policies.

In light of this, 1,120 citizens responded that if the West saw itself faced with a strong government, it would work to formulate a truce with it. Others thought that the Islamists would injure the West, which might cut off aid from countries.

These Islamists said that we must not die or surrender; we must fight like our forefathers.

A third group thought that the NDP government could be inoculated with Islamic and other party elements that would assume control of the course of domestic policy. A fourth group thought that the NDP government was an autocracy that did not look out for the country's interests.

With studies and reports stressing the popularity of the Islamic current and warning that its control over local councils could spell the beginning of the end for the ruling party, which, according to UKTUBAR, has stifled Egyptians for more than 13 years with its opportunists, the oversight agencies aimed even more criticisms at the ruling party—specifically:

- There are no definite and clear party organizational levels in elections. Candidates for elections have been selected haphazardly, based on favors and family connections.
- Many ruling party candidates lack political dynamism. These leaders have been unable to solve the problems of Egyptian society due to their tendency to put their personal and family interests above the general good.

Some oversight agencies have prepared reports that state that interference by ruling party leaders in drafting plans for the reelection of the president could lead Egyptian citizens to abstain from voting. Many of the ruling party's leaders have reacted by hastening to condemn these reports, accusing them of ignorance and tactlessness. They claim that the oversight agencies are intentionally distorting the facts and trying to carry on personal feuds with the leaders of the NDP.

Results of Poll by Official Agency Showing Sweep by Islamic Current in Rural Egypt

Governorate	Islamic Alliance	NDP (With Other Parties)
Al-Daqahliyah	12 villages	7 villages
Al-Sharqiyah	16 villages	3 villages
Al-Gharbiyah	14 villages	4 villages
Al-Jizah	20 villages	3 villages
Asyut	7 villages	5 villages
Bani Suwayf	10 villages	4 villages
Qina	6 villages	2 villages
Al-Minya	75 percent	25 percent

Official Describes Ozone Protection Initiatives

93AF0219A Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY
in English 4 Nov 92 p 4

[First paragraph is introduction; boldface words as published]

[Text] The destruction of the ozone layer can be prevented if the world unites in eliminating its use of ozone depleting substances. Last week Egypt was awarded the funding which will allow its phasing-out process to begin. **Dr. Yusef Mazhar**, first under-secretary to the Ministry of Industry, explains the situation.

Last week, as part of a global effort to prevent the destruction of the ozone layer, Egypt was given grants totalling over \$3 million which will help it to eventually eliminate the use of all ozone depleting substances (ODSs).

Although it could be seen as yet another financial burden on a country already stretched by the demands of economic restructuring and development, it is a necessary task.

In 1988 Egypt ratified the Montreal Protocol, an agreement signed by over 70 countries to reduce the emissions of ODSs by regulating the consumption of these substances.

ODSs are mostly found in aerosols (used for cosmetic purposes or for insecticides), in the compressors of refrigerators, water coolers and air conditioners, and in the foam industry in the manufacture of mattresses, furniture and packaging materials.

The ozone layer protects the earth from dangerous ultra-violet rays, which can cause skin cancer, destroy plankton (the main source of nutrition for marine life), destroy some kinds of crops and, in the long term, increase global temperatures, with all the drastic ill-effects that this could entail. ODSs destroy the ozone layer at an alarming rate, thus letting through the ultra-violet rays.

Egypt began to reduce ODS consumption in 1986. So far a 60 per cent reduction in use has been achieved by a government ban on the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in aerosols. The current consumption of ODSs is nearly 2000 tons per year, or 0.033 kg per capita.

The bulk of the demand is concentrated in industries that manufacture and service home refrigerators. The seven fridge and freezer manufacturers in Egypt have a capacity to produce and install about one million units per year. There are also an estimated 150,000 air conditioned vehicles in Egypt, approximately one-third of which need service and recharging each year.

A study prepared with the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme gives two alternative scenarios for the optimum phase-out strategy for Egypt.

In strategy one the transition to ODS substitutes is not completed until the year 2000, as the Montreal Protocol requires. Strategy two aspires to fully accomplish the transition over the period 1992 to 1998.

The study puts the net incremental cost at between \$26 million and \$129 million depending on the speed of the phasing-out process on economic growth conditions.

It is important to mention that there is actually no choice in the adoption of these changes, not only because of world commitment to the Montreal Protocol but also because there will eventually be no production of the substances now used.

The economic cost associated with the forced early replacement of household refrigerators makes up the dominant part of these figures. There will be about 10 million refrigerators in service by the year 2010; replacement costs will be needed for manufacturers to shift from the banned CFC-12 to HFC-134a, which does not deplete the ozone layer.

The Interim Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol will help offset these costs. In the eighth meeting of the Interim Fund's executive committee held last week, Egypt was awarded grant funding for a number of essential projects.

In order to produce new compressors which conform to requirements a new compressor company, Misr Compressor Manufacturing Company, a joint venture between the private sector and a number of banks will receive \$2.8 million. The public sector Misr Engineering and Refrigeration Company will receive \$272,000 and three private sector foam manufacturers will also receive an unspecified amount. Further assistance will be discussed in the ninth meeting of the Interim Fund in February next year.

The next essential step is to turn this "interim" fund into a permanent one so as to continue the work needed until the developing countries have completely phased out their use of ODSs. Next month the signatories of the Montreal Protocol will meet in Copenhagen where they will come to a decision over this.

Egypt will have thus contributed to the sustaining of the vital ozone layer. Its risk of depletion is entirely due to technologies developed by man, ignorant at the time of dangers, fascinated only by his ability to develop methods

of cooling and refrigeration. Little did he suspect the damage he was doing to the heavens while he solved his problems on earth.

Experts Discuss Shortcomings in Scientific Research

93AF0217A Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY
in English 28 Oct 92 p 4

[Article by Manal Rezkalla and Ihab Hassan: "Research Abhors a Vacuum"]

[Text] In the absence of a link between scientific output and decision making, over 300 research centres in Egypt are practically useless. Manal Rezkalla and Ihab Hassan find out why.

Dr Ismail Sabri Abdallah, a prominent economist and former minister of planning, believes that Egypt has an aversion to science and scientific research, and that even when Egyptians decide to apply modern technology, they resort to foreign expertise rather than exploiting and paying Egyptian experts. Consequently, the importance of scientific research is undervalued, and the resort to the experience of other countries diminishes incentive toward Egyptian expertise. Dr Sabri added that with the open door era, quick returns became society's main objective and people were diverted from research. Moreover, Dr Sabri stressed that research in Egypt needs encouragement and finances, in addition to extensive documentation and publication whereby the results may be transmitted to the public.

Dr Othman M. Othman, professor of economics at the National Planning Institute, said that in order for researchers (and their research) to be rightly acknowledged, they have to win public opinion so as to put pressure on government bodies.

Competition is the solution offered by Abdel-Moneim Radi, professor of economics and vice-president of Ain Shams University. He believes that the principle of innovation is based on competition. When demand exceeds supply, the situation will change. The state's trend towards economic liberalisation and privatisation will create internal and external competition which, in turn, require the benefits of scientific research.

Dr Omar Salman, professor of international economy at the Faculty of Foreign Trade, believes the disinterest of economists is attributable to the unclear targets of policy makers; according to him, most of the time university professors are derided by officials who ignore research results and proposals. Such an attitude is made manifest when technical commissions are formed to study a specific problem without including specialists.

Since 1966 approximately 7,500 academic theses in Arabic and English have accumulated in Egypt's Central Library. Sadly, there is a growing concern that the effort put into these works of research remains ink on paper—or only a means of receiving a degree.

Policy making in Egypt is generally divorced from research, especially on economy—whether on the macro or

micro-economic level. Thus, feeling unappreciated, Egyptian researchers and scientists tend to emigrate.

According to Dr Ali Lutfi, former prime minister and chairman of the Shura Council, the inefficiency in the research system results from the lack of a single body responsible for coordination. Many times research is duplicated, which means that money is spent uselessly and a lot of effort is needlessly wasted. Lutfi added that research is the prime responsibility of every company, authority and government body. He suggests establishing a single central body responsible for compiling a booklet of titles of researches conducted annually. Such a booklet would help prevent duplication and facilitate the work of officials and researchers themselves. He also suggests the compilation of another booklet specifically for conference recommendations.

Furthermore, Dr Salman notes an absence of national coordination, pointing out that most of the problems currently under study have already been dealt with by university researchers.

Dr Salman suggests that scientific research and business interests be linked by commissioning universities to undertake preliminary studies with the aim of reaching solutions to the specific problems of specific sectors. The findings of scientific research, he says, should be incorporated into a comprehensive strategy.

Moreover, specialised bodies should be established for publishing important research so as to contribute to enriching scientific thinking and enhancing practice.

These objectives can be achieved when productive sectors and data sources become convinced that scientific research is ultimately directed to serving their own interests, and to serve those of the researcher whose objective is to contribute to solving a given problem.

Dr Salman emphasises that accuracy should be stressed in a symposium addressing chronic problems. In his opinion, current research and studies presented at conferences are not useful and do not even measure up to the job at hand, due to the lack of funds and researchers' belief that the fruits of their labours are doomed to waste. Consequently, some of these conferences become merely a means of perpetrating superficial ideas or a vehicle for publicity.

The absence of contingency plans in international negotiations is a phenomenon in Egypt, said Dr Salman; negotiators often go to the negotiating table without alternative plans at hand—alternatives which should have been prepared by scientific researchers.

Commenting on the importance of linking decision making to scientific research, Dr Gamal Zahran, professor of political science at the Suez Canal University says: "The issue is two-sided. On the one hand, there is the environment factor. When scientific thinking is prevalent, the gap between research and decision making is usually bridged.

On the other hand, there is the role played by the government and official bodies. These can contribute a great deal to the adoption of scientific findings and of decisions based on scientific fact. The government, for example, should rely on the opinion of experts in the targeted field, on which there is a consensus."

The problem, said Dr Zahran, is that of scientific research in general. Almost 50 per cent of Egyptian society is illiterate, and expenditure on scientific research does not exceed 0.2 per cent of the GDP [Gross Domestic Product]. Moreover, Egypt ranks 12th among Arab countries in its expenditure on education. In addition, Egyptian inventions are infrequently patented. Egypt has only 17,000 patents (compared with Israel's 72,000), of which only 50 per cent are executed. Also the mass media is not concerned with scientific research—a symposium is only covered by the media when a prominent official figure is present—and then, only his inauguration speech is reported, while the core subject of the conference is ignored.

A more optimistic view was put forward by Dr Hisham El-Sherif, who heads the Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Centre. He said that the connection between research and government is gradually improving: "It is now increasingly obvious that there is more connection, utilisation, cohesion and employment of thought, opinion, studies and information to lay down policies and serve decision making—the perfect example of which is the current economic and social reform programmes."

"Dr El-Sherif added that these programmes could never succeed without the application of scientific research, especially in challenging issues such as Egypt's debts, monetary policy reform, public sector liberalisation privatisation, educational reform, and the other 15 dimensions of Egypt's economic and social reform programmes."

It was pointed out by Dr El-Sherif that strengthening the link between research and application will be useful in a different way under a market-oriented economy. "The survival of businesses in the future depends on global competitiveness, and research will be essential in keeping businesses up to date on [word illegible] technology and quality standards [word illegible] concluded."

JORDAN

Germany Finances Water Recycling Projects

93P40057A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 Nov 92 p 12

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—Germany has agreed to offer Jordan 55.2 million Deutsche marks, equal to \$34.5 million, in aid to finance used water discharge projects.

Germany will send some experts to Jordan as part of the agreement.

Politicians Voice Reservations on Parties

93AE0102B Amman AL-LIWA' in Arabic
28 Oct 92 p 21

[Article by Nasir Ghannam: "Registration of Parties Proceeds at Snail's Pace"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Mr. Khalil al-Sawahiri (man of letters, author, and owner of al-Karmal Publishing and Distribution) said: "Democracy basically has no meaning if it is restricted to one shade. I think that democracy cannot become complete without a multiparty system." He added: "The single-party experiments in the Soviet Union and Eastern-bloc countries have demonstrated the extent of the failure that the single-party system caused in their economy and in overall conditions and the enormity of the losses they suffered under single-party rule. The same can be said about other Third World countries: The experience of single-party rule caused them countless setbacks. A multiparty system is one of the cultural signs of democracy. Only through it can the play of democracy become complete. A multiparty system, however, certainly does not mean tribalism or personal loyalties. How can matters be sound if what we get from parties is much more than ideologies, special ideas, or definite goals that can distinguish one party from another? A multiparty system certainly does not mean party anarchy. Similarity of ideas and goals calls for fusion and unification, not scattering and fragmentation. So a multiparty system has its requirements. Its being necessary for the democratic process does not mean that it should turn into a means of setting oneself up as a leader, or into tribalism, or into a way to reach parliament."

As for whether he is ready to participate in the experiment, he said: "My past party experience in the 1960's and 1970's led me to spurn party activity. I need not explain here the reasons that moved me to quarrel with party work and not return to it. Frankly, my separation from party work during this period led me to a kind of refreshing indifference and the pleasure of the experience of being a close observer. For the time being, I feel no inclination to return to party life, but no one knows about the future. Real democratic practice and a true multiparty system might motivate every citizen to join in an honest party experiment. We can make a few observations about the course of democracy to date. A multiparty system has not yet begun, but there is great hope that such a system will become established and enter the phase of legal operation at the grass roots, in the press, and in institutions. One observation that needs to be made now is that the first signs of the multiparty system are not based on ideological differences or variety of goals; they are based on tribal walls and personal loyalties that could harm the multiparty system in the future. As some observers have said, a multiparty system could take various directions. Different parties could be included under it in blocs. Under the Islamic current, for example, the Islamic outlooks would be included; under the nationalistic, [Arab] unity current the nationalistic, [Arab] unity outlooks would be included. I do not know whether there are other outlooks that concentrate on social conditions and the search for solutions to various economic problems under which parties could be included. But such fronts or election lists would be

announced or formed on the eve of elections. In this regard, some of the lists that were formed on the eve of elections for the 13th Israeli Knesset come to mind, for example, the housewives' list or the list of those harmed by housing loans, etc. A multiparty system has advantages, but its drawbacks, if it goes too far, could be more than its benefits."

Fahmi Ghannam, a former party figure, said: "Every country in the world has certain characteristics that distinguish it from other countries. Jordan is marked by certain qualities that dictate that it should move irrevocably on the road to democracy. These characteristics are:

- It is a country of differing origins and roots.
- It is a country with a problem. The Palestinian problem, in all its dimensions, is Jordan's problem in war or in peace. Whoever tries to deny this fact is like an ostrich trying to hide itself by burying its head in the sand.
- It is a country characterized by a high level of education and culture. The only solution to the problem of the cultured and educated is the democratic solution.

"Therefore, whatever the drawbacks of the democratic course may be, its advantages are greater. The only solution that will overcome the drawbacks of democracy—of course it has drawbacks—is to deepen the exercise of democracy. Such deepening is the only guarantee of overcoming many of the drawbacks. Democracy in its sound form necessarily has to be limited. This limitedness does not come to pass by government or executive decree. Only with the passage of years of democratic practice will many of the organizations whose existence is unjustified shrink. Only the names of their founders and a few of the individuals connected with them who definitely benefited from their existence will remain. In the end, only the effective popular organizations will remain on the political scene. Although the existence of so many political organizations on the scene is disturbing in the beginning, the sieve will keep working over time, so that in the end, a limited, reasonable number of political organizations will remain.

"As for my possible participation in party activity, my experience in the 1960's has influenced my current position, which is that I will choose the side of the silent majority of the public, which does not imprison itself in a restricted view of matters based on an ideology with a narrow point of view. I therefore announce that I am not ready to embark on another party experience. It is not that I am afraid of something or about something; it is only because the first experience proved to me, after I decided to leave that experience voluntarily and without any pressures, that looking at matters when you are free and unrestricted is deeper and truer. I am not opposed to a person's involvement in party experience, because such experience builds the personality, deepens thought, and gives the individual the ability to analyze and take a position. However, I believe that I personally have had enough of this experience. I am not ready to repeat it. Finally, I hope that the people of this country, whether involved in political parties or not, will view the country's interest as above personal and party interests and that they will abide by this vision."

Dr. Nizam 'Assaf (doctorate in political science) said: "For some time we have been seeing a debate on the subject of

a multiparty system. Those who announce their opinions agree that a multiparty system is necessary for the victory of the democratic path in this fair country. However, from my point of view, the heart of the matter does not lie in what is being proclaimed from various pulpits. Debating in this way at the end of the 20th century is rather like debating whether or not oxygen is necessary to life." He added: "I believe the heart of the matter lies in the relation between pluralism and the party system. This constitutes an important subject that has not been discussed or handled well. Neither pluralism nor the party system can have a human face unless they become visible according to their true nature without any concealing or falsifying veil, as visible as a baby in the first minutes after its birth. The essence of pluralism manifests itself in people's natural right to be participants in knowledge, ownership, work, authority, and security. The essence of the party system becomes visible in its being a mechanism for achieving this natural right, first within the parties themselves, and then in the society within which these parties were born naturally. I therefore think that the theory and practice of a multiparty system must abandon the narrow view of individual self-interests of those who attend to this project from every direction. One can therefore say that the hope and desire in the world today is that everyone can reach the shore of safety by realizing the content of the oldest of human messages: 'People are partners in three things: water, pasture, and fire'—realizing this in accordance with the facts of the age in which we live."

About his readiness to participate he said: "I have a readiness and unflagging eagerness to participate in party life, regardless of my private observations about the popular nature and quality of the presently existing parties and regardless of my profound awareness of the nature of Third World societies, dominated as they are by concepts belonging to the patriarchal period. Unfortunately, these concepts have taken root, even in some of the parties that wreath themselves with modernity. Naturally, my motive for participating is to contribute as much as possible to the growth and development of the existing reality relating to the multiparty system, so that the concepts of justice, equality, and freedom may prevail in this society to which I proudly belong."

Concerning his observations about party experience he said: "The most important positive observation about this experience is that it has mapped an appropriate way to open a new page, regardless of what will be written about this experiment later. My conviction is that there is a realistic possibility for this page to be filled with bright bold letters. The hands of this experiment point to the importance of its liberating itself now and in the future from the nightmares of the past. Thus far, the experiment indicates the existence of a great gap that is embodied in the lack of success in unifying certain parties that resemble each other. I think the only real obstacle is putting self-interest first. Time will suffice to reveal the falseness of the veil behind which such self-interested persons hide. This experiment also indicates how some political parties tend toward tribalism and regionalism. This harms the overall democratic experiment. Finally, I would say that everyone

should realize that there is a new world taking shape around us and that we are a part of it. It is undesirable for us to stand on its sidelines. This means that we must familiarize ourselves with the literature, science, and democratization of our great world and our small world."

Mr. Husayn Fayiz (private citizen) said: "Inasmuch as the Islamic shari'ah is not fully applied in Jordanian society, the presence of parliament is necessary so that a Muslim may perform his duty as a righteous confidant helping the ruler create an alternative to the shura [consultative] council in Islam. As for the multiparty system, most of the parties that can be found among us have foreign roots and connections not emanating from the life of the Jordanian citizen or carrying the principles on which Jordan originally was based. As for my participating—if a party such as I have just described existed, there would be nothing to prevent me from participating. But it does not exist yet. My basic observation is that democracy in its correct conception has yet not taken root among the people. Democracy does not mean pulpits from which to vilify and insult someone; rather, it means mutual respect for differing ideas. For the concepts of democracy to take root, all official and popular parties must work together to realize a sound democratic course."

Mr. (Abu-Uns) (private citizen) said: "We do not have to discuss a subject such as this—for one simple and clear reason: whatever is built on vanity is vain. Parliament and a multiparty system have come about because the Islamic shari'ah has not been applied, so that these two things might be an alternative to a shura council chosen by the nation's ulema and Islamic jurists—not by ordinary folk, who might choose as a result of offers of money or participate in party activity because they have no other work. The revealed law about this is clear!"

These were all the ideas that this select, not random, sample presented in order to continue the communication and discussion for the purpose of participating in mapping a right course that will ensure that those who follow it will continue on a course of building and self-reliance as a prelude to an economic and political independence that will create a situation unique in the region.

IAF Head on Other Parties, Ideology, Membership

93AE0084A Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 13 Oct 92 p 5

[Interview with Dr. Ishaq al-Farhan, secretary-general of the Islamic Action Front Party, by Samih al-Ma'ayitah; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted]

[Al-Ma'ayitah] What do you think about the allegation that the Islamic Action Front [IAF] is no more than a partisan framework for the Muslim Brotherhood? What sort of relationship exists between the Front and the Brotherhood?

[Al-Farhan] [Passage omitted] The Brotherhood, in fact, supports any movement to consolidate Islamic action. That is why the birth of the Front has enjoyed the support

of the Brotherhood and why a group of Islamists from the Brotherhood and others have called for the creation of an Islamic party that would comprise the largest possible number of those engaged in political action for Islam. The Front is not the Muslim Brotherhood, nor is it a political front for it, but it is open to the Brothers and other Islamists or to any citizen who commits to the IAF's systems and ideology.

The IAF is an Islamist political entity that is administratively, organizationally, and financially independent. Its decisions are made from within in accordance with the basic rules of consultation [shura].

[Al-Ma'ayitah] How would you describe the IAF to Jordanian citizens, in as far as ideology and strategy are concerned?

[Al-Farhan] The IAF's objectives are the same as the Islamic strategic objectives. The most important such objectives are to bring society to apply Islamic shari'ah to all life endeavors; to serve the Palestinian cause, because it is the primary issue for Muslims; establish the values of consultation and democracy; bolster national unity as a springboard towards Arab and Islamic unification endeavors; focus on Muslim causes; and pay attention to citizens' concerns in all the service aspects of life. It is in the pursuit of those objectives that the IAF engages in all forms of political action, such as [parliamentary] representation and involvement in the executive authority using all the means, systems, and techniques that will [bring success] to the Front's programs and realize its objectives of serving the national interest and helping the nation regain its position in international society.

The IAF has programs in the domestic, Arab, Muslim, and humanitarian fields. The most important domestic issues that these programs deal with are:

- the food security program;
- a home for every citizen;
- reducing unemployment;
- the Islamization of knowledge;
- fighting expatriation;
- promulgating Islamic shari'ah as the law of the land;
- supporting the intifadah;
- bringing about Palestinian-Jordanian unity.

Programs on the Islamic and Arab fronts include:

plans for Arab unity and solidarity;

an Arab-Islamic renaissance;

challenging the new world order;

helping to establish a front to resist American domination.

The IAF, through study and research, will implement practical projects of obvious scientific nature and will clarify the vision of the nation's masses as they progress toward reform and away from the weaknesses and backwardness they suffer. [passage omitted]

[Al-Ma'ayitah] The Jordanian model of the relationship between Islamists and the state is a unique paragon that is free of many of the negatives that we see in some sister

countries. What is the Front's strategy for managing relations with the state and for bolstering and promoting that model, especially because the Front will be the vanguard of Islamic political action?

[Al-Farhan] Islamic action is limited by the existence of local forces that deplore the presence of Islamists and therefore attempt to fish in murky waters and magnify any minor mistakes to the government and to the masses.

Contemporary Islamic political ideology falls short because its lack of practical experience renders it unable to deal with several issues. This is why we strive to develop our experiences and abilities through practices and initiatives that may hit or miss. This is fine as long as we learn by our mistakes and use those experiences to develop our political competence and ideology.

We are all aware of the international assault on the Islamic renaissance. The leaders of that assault seek to distort the image of Islam and of Islamic political action.

In view of those obstacles, and in order to persevere in the responsibility of Islamic action, we must espouse the concepts of gradual reform and of centrism, because haste makes waste. We reject political fanaticism. We also reject the shortsighted view of Islam as mere religion and ritual worship. This is why we seek to present a centrist Islamic model that is rooted in Islamic tenets and that deals with the nation's causes in an empirical and learned fashion. We see no reason, therefore, to fear any entity, governmental or not, domestic or foreign. They are citizens. Muslims, as a majority in Arab and Muslim nations, are entitled as citizens to practice their political rights. We hope that the Jordanian Islamic political action paragon becomes a model. The past few years have proved that the Jordanian Islamic model comes closest to serving the people and dealing with their problems. Furthermore, it depends not on violence, but on peaceful and empirical means. It believes in gradual reform and in intellectual and political plurality. [passage omitted]

[Al-Ma'ayitah] How do you envision the parties of the future in Jordan?

[Al-Farhan] We are aware that a large number of parties are being formed, but we believe that the number that the media has cited in the media is incorrect. We expect the initial number of parties to be in the teens, but they will eventually consolidate into a few big parties, which is normal. That is the reason I believe that the Islamic Action Front will comprise a large number of Islamists. There will be few other Islamist parties, if any.

National parties, on the other hand, tend to consolidate under the banner of the National Coalition. This is also true of the center parties, which are involved more with services than with ideological philosophy.

As for leftist parties, only one or two may emerge with political and popular weight.

I believe therefore that there will be no more than five large and effective political parties.

Editorial Defends Hizballah, Armed Conflicts*93AE0102A Amman AL-LIWA' in Arabic 28 Oct 92 p 1*

[Editorial: "Who Makes History? Jihad Operations Are the Real Umbrella for the Negotiation Process"]

[Text] Without emotionally applauding the commando operation by Hizballah fighters in South Lebanon, this operation has more than one significance as the "political settlement" train pulls out of the station. After seven rounds that have produced no real fruit, the Arab and Israeli delegations are still wavering in place, looking for the ABC's of negotiating, such as agreement on agenda, terms, authority, and other such general settings that must be agreed upon before entering into deeper, real negotiation.

The commando operation thoroughly whets the appetite to talk about settling Arab-Jewish conflicts that have resisted solutions for nearly a century.

Before launching into a review of the operation's dimensions and its effects on the negotiations and the entire peace process, let us briefly consider the official American statements usually issued after every operation of this kind. They always have turned out to be a big lie to the effect that conflicts can be solved only by political means and negotiation. Such statements never forget to call for "restraint" and patience, so that conditions become aggravated and approach an explosion.

The reply to this lie is simple and easy. History tells us that all the political, economic, and even social conditions prevailing in the world took shape only after armed conflicts of some sort. American unity, for example, solidified only after a crushing civil war. America's magnified role in the world attained its present size only after World War II. The French enjoyed a stable political system and a just, democratic republic only after a bloody revolution. This was the case in the rise and fall of the old empires. America and its 30 allies gave the most recent example of settling a conflict by armed means in their war of aggression against Iraq and the Arab nation, which they prosecuted until war brought results that they would not have been able to achieve without armed force! It seems to us that people in the West, especially in Washington, allow to themselves what they forbid to others, so that they can come out on top and impose their will on our nation forever.

To return to the Hizballah operation and the operations of the Islamic resistance in Palestine (Hamas): they have had their effect on the Jews and have given the conflict its magnificent, real form again. The truth is that such operations, if they are exploited, can serve as elements that support the Arab negotiator, who, for example, can allude to fighters such as these and use them to create fear in order to win real gains in the negotiations. There is nothing wrong with this. Sudan, for example, negotiates with the southern rebels with one hand and attacks them with the other. That is what the Vietnamese revolutionaries did with the Americans!

There is another side to this operation. It proves that the jihad will continue to the ends of the earth and that no one has the power to still the living heartbeat of this nation. If one place becomes still, another becomes prominent. This is God's decree, that the banner of jihad shall remain raised forever. This does not mean that this nation is seeking blood without cause. Instead, it does so because its own blood constantly is sought by its enemies. There is no better indication of this than the fields of suffering and violence in many parts of this world. Hardly a day passes without the shedding of Muslim blood at the hands of voracious enemies whose thirst for Muslim blood is insatiable.

Government Issues 1991 Census Figures*93AE0084B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
13 Oct 92 p 13*

[Article: "Annual Report of the Census Bureau: Half the Kingdom's Population 20 Years or Younger"]

[Text] Jordan had a population of 3.888 million by the end of last year. This is an increase of about 450,000 over 1990 and of about 770,000 over 1989, according to estimates in the annual report of the General Bureau of Census.

The report indicated the following population distribution in the governorates: Amman, 1.572 million people; Irbid, 950,000 people; al-Zarqa', 601,000 people; al-Balqa', 239,000; al-Karak, 163,000; al-Mafraq, 156,000; Ma'an, 144,000; and al-Tafilah, 62,000 people.

Jordan has 2.002 million [as published] males and 1.882 million [as published] females. The urban population in the kingdom is 3.029 million, compared with a rural population of 858,000. "Urban" is defined as communities of 5,000 residents or more.

The report indicated that 2.174 million Jordanians, or more than half of the population, are under the age of 20. Those between the ages of 20 and 40 numbered 1.076 million. Some 3.150 million Jordanians are therefore under the age of 40.

The report said that 150,000 births were recorded with the Civil Affairs Department last year. This compares with 116,000 births in 1990 and of 115,000 births a year earlier.

There were 11,200 recorded deaths in the kingdom in 1991, compared with 10,500 in 1990.

According to the report, there were 35,900 marriage contracts in 1991, compared with 32,700 a year earlier and with 31,500 marriages in 1989. Most marriages involved couples between the ages of 20 and 30. There were 1,038 marriages to non-Jordanian women last year. Of the males married in 1991, 30,900 were being married for the first time; 2,100 were previously married; 2,100 were divorced; and 553 were widowers. Of the women married the same year 33,200 were married for the first time; 2,400 were divorced; and 232 were widows.

Interestingly, the report recorded four marriage contracts for males under 15 years of age and 48 contracts for males 75 years of age and older. Ten of the latter were being

married for the first time. Twenty marriages involved women younger than 15 years of age, and six were to women older than 75 years, of whom five were not previously married.

The report said that some 5,300 divorces occurred in 1991, compared with about 5,000 in 1990 and 4,600 in 1989.

Crops Destroyed Due to Polluted Water

93WN0112B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
14 Oct 92 p 12

[Report from al-Zarqa' by Zahi Raja: "Crops Irrigated by Waters of al-Kharbah al-Samra' in al-Zarqa' Basin Are Destroyed"]

[Excerpt] Al-Zarqa' Public Safety Commission yesterday began the destruction of crops irrigated by al-Kharbah al-Samra' waters in order to safeguard public health and in observance of public health laws. Destroyed were hundreds of dunams planted with vegetables irrigated with al-Kharbah al-Samra' waters. The vegetables would have been eaten raw or cooked.

Authorities have ordered the destruction of hundreds of dunams planted with cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant, and spinach. A small area planted with carrots was also scheduled for destruction. The operation was carried out with combines that belong to the Public Works Department and to certain municipalities.

Ghalib Azmaqna

Ghalib Azmaqna, assistant to the governor of al-Zarqa' and the head of the safety commission, said that the order to destroy the crops was a protective measure to safeguard citizens and their health.

He said that all concerned agencies normally conduct regular and constant inspections to oversee the crops and examine water sources as to their suitability. He added that this is not the first time that crops have been destroyed "because we consider Jordan to be pollution-free, and such developments are dealt with on a regular basis."

Azmaqna emphasized that all irrigation sources, as well as vegetables, are monitored regularly and undergo laboratory tests.

Azmaqna lauded the farmers who complied with the destruction order without complaint and who were fully understanding. He pointed out that the government is giving the issue due attention and that farmers will be compensated.

Ibrahim Abu-'Atilah

Irrigation engineer Ibrahim Abu-'Atilah, director of agriculture for al-Zarqa' Governorate, said: "We have conducted a field survey of all cultivated land in Sail-al-Zarqa' and found out that al-Kharbah al-Samra' waters irrigate 988 dunams, representing more than 4 percent of vegetable farms in the governorate, which is of no consequence considering the area of farmland in the kingdom."

He added that agencies of the Agriculture Department recorded the assets of those farms before the crops were destroyed, thereby protecting farmers' interest at the time compensation is paid.

He also said that the crops have been destroyed according to a decree issued by the prime minister and according to public health laws in order to safeguard the well-being of citizens and ensure that the vegetables available to them are healthful. [passage omitted]

Sales Tax To Take Effect in Early 1993

93P40056A

[Editorial Report] London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic of 6 November 1992 reports on page 9 that the Finance Ministry has put forward the new sales tax bill, which is expected to take effect at "the beginning of 1993." A related report in the London monthly AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic of 25 November 1992 on page 89 reports that the bill's aim is "to spread the tax burden over a wide scope, while retaining some of the advantages for Jordanian industry in order to keep down production costs." The new bill places goods under four categories:

- "Basic commodities, including food, medicine, and childrens' and students' necessities: no tax;
- Luxury items: 25 percent tax;
- Goods on which customs fees are imposed, such as cigarettes, will retain their current high rate: 200 to 300 percent tax;
- All other goods: 10 percent tax.

Revenues from this tax are expected to be approximately 100 million Jordanian dinars (\$146 million)."

Building Boom Spawns Black Market for Concrete

93P40055A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
25 Nov 92 p 79

[Text] The construction boom that Jordan is currently experiencing has spawned a sort of black market for concrete. In this market, one ton sells for 70 to 80 Jordanian dinars, while the official price is 39 dinars per ton.

For nearly two years, Jordan has been witnessing a stabilization of conditions for emigres returning from Kuwait and Iraq and a general expansion in construction of new buildings for both housing and investment purposes. Permits to build on more than 7.5 million square meters have been granted to both the public and private sectors. More than 60 percent of these are for the private sector.

LEBANON

Election of Parliamentary Committees Reported

93AE0096A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
6 Nov 92 p 2

[Article: "Chamber Elects Members of Appeals Committee and of 13 Other Committees"]

[Text] Beirut—In a public session yesterday at its headquarters in al-Najmah Square under the chairmanship of Speaker Nabih Birri, the Chamber of Deputies elected members of the Parliamentary Appeals Committee and 13 other joint committees. At the outset of the session, which was attended by 118 ministers and deputies, Speaker Birri requested perusal of Article 52 of the bylaws, which calls for electing an alternate deputy to replace any deputy who fails to attend three successive [committee meetings] without an excuse. The speaker attributed his request to the fact that, "in the past, deputies vied for committee membership and then failed to attend the meetings when they were elected. Consequently, only a third of the members attended. Because the new chamber is young, because it seeks action and accomplishment, and because any issue has to go through the committees before it is submitted to a general assembly, necessity dictates that an alternate be elected in case a deputy fails to attend more than three times."

A proposal by Deputy 'Abd-al-Latif al-Zayn was read. It called for electing the committees in accordance with the old bylaws, which permit presenting printed lists of candidates for each committee. Other deputies asked what the old bylaws mean. Birri explained: "It was customary to hold the election after consultations between a parliamentary committee and the parliamentary blocs to distribute deputies among the committees. When numerous candidates ran for election to the same committee, lists of the candidates were printed and provided to the attending deputies to save them the trouble of having to write the names of the 17 or 12 candidates voted into each committee. It would have taken a long time to write the names by hand."

Deputy Najah Wakim objected, saying: "In the past, we elected committee members on the basis of the old bylaws, and the result was that committee members were almost appointed. This is what caused truancy from the meetings. Let us hold the elections with open nominations, so that the committees can be effective and so each committee member will shoulder his responsibility."

Deputy Fathi Yakan called for postponing the session for further consultation. Deputy Zuhayr al-'Ubaydi said: "If fear of application of the new bylaws, which call for open nomination during the session without any [advance] lists—if this fear is due to the need to observe balance in the distribution of committee seats among the sects, and considering that we are in the process of eliminating political sectarianism, then we will not oppose the outcome of an open election, even if a committee ends up being formed of members of a single sect."

Speaker Birri then reasserted that "it was customary in the past to distribute papers containing the names of colleagues who could become committee members. But this did not mean that an elected member could not delete a name and replace it with another. The speaker never intervened in this matter." The speaker also noted that a committee headed by al-Zayn had consulted with the parliamentary blocs and denied press reports that the speakers had participated in preparing lists. He said: "we told any deputy who called us to contact Deputy al-Zayn."

Deputy Speaker Eli al-Farzali gave his views, referring to statements by some deputies about eliminating political sectarianism and to what others had said about deputies who may not attend committee meetings. He urged that this "be taken into consideration, so that criteria compatible with the phase preceding the abolition of political sectarianism can be established." He said that we "must not be governed by a slogan that is still under discussion in our Constitution and we must take into account the need not to make anybody feel excluded."

Summing up, Birri said, "Wakim's opinion is an attempt for greater and greater democratic action, and the objective of al-Zayn's opinion is to save time. The speaker has not intervened in the issue."

Deputy August Bakhus demanded that new bylaws be enacted so that no deputy can be member of more than two committees, but he urged adoption of [procedures of] the old bylaws, "because, on the basis of the new bylaws, we will not complete the election in a month."

Deputy Mikhayil al-Dahir proposed a compromise that called for a minor change in the bylaws, so that no deputy can be elected member of more than two committees. Deputy Wakim supported him, saying: "There is no objection to taking time to elect the committees, especially because they will not be able to meet until the cabinet gains the vote of confidence." Birri interposed to ask: "Why? Are there 51 plans pending?" Joking, Wakim went on to add: "The cabinet will get the vote of confidence at the assembly next week, if it has not already gotten it last week." Interrupting, Birri said: "In this assembly, things are not done this way. Even though we appreciate the prime minister, there is a cabinet statement to be submitted and a public session to be held for the vote of confidence. If you will help us, you will find that this assembly will not be anybody's rubber stamp." Wakim responded: "We hope so."

Al-Dahir supported Wakim's statements that the committees cannot start working until after the vote of confidence because then it would be more legitimate for a minister to attend committee meetings. Birri presented al-Zayn's proposal for a vote by a show of hands and then said, "It has the majority." Some deputies, including Karami, protested, saying, "There is no majority." The chamber secretary general called for a vote count. This was done and the secretary said, "60 votes for." Birri announced that the proposal to vote on the basis of the old bylaws was passed, but Karami protested, "As long as we have decided to count the vote, then the names should be read out loud." In

response, Birri said, "We do not want to vote again. We voted a second time so that there would be no doubt." Karami responded, "I have said nothing about casting doubts. I am talking about the law." Birri said, "We are for the law."

The process to elect committee members was then conducted on the basis of the old bylaws. Printed lists containing the names of candidates to the various committees, put together on agreement with the blocs, were distributed to the deputies.

Here are the results of the elections to the Appeals Committee and the 13 other committees:

- Appeals Committee (three-month term): Ayman Shuqayr, August Bakhus, Muhammad Kabbarah, Najah Wakim, and Hasan 'Alawiyah. Deputy Mahmud Tabbu lost.
- Finance and Budget Committee: Pierre Hilu, Soren Khan Amirian, Fayiz Ghushn, 'Ali al-Khalil, Samir 'Azar, Nayilah [or Na'ilah] Mu'awwad, Salim Habib, Muhammad Yusuf Baydun, Khalil 'Abd-al-Nur, Talal al-Mar'ibi, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid Baydun, Khadr Tulays, Salim Sa'adah, Nasib Lahhud, Khalil al-Harawi, Rabi'ah Kayruz, and Salih al-Khayr.
- Administration and Justice Committee: August Bakhus, 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Rahman, Riyad Abi-Fadil, 'Abd-al-Latif al-Zayn, Muhammad Kabbarah, Ahmad Suwayd, Khatchik Babikian; Joseph Mughayzil, 'Isam Nu'man, 'Ali Mita, Robert Ghanim, Hasan 'Alawiyah, Muhammad Ra'd, Camille Ziyadah, Mas'ud Rufayil, As'ad Harmush, and Qabalan 'Isa al-Khuri. Deputies Ghassan Matar, Ilyas al-Khazin, Zahir al-Khatib, and 'Ali 'Id lost.
- Foreign Affairs Committee: Amin al-Hafiz, Nasib Lahhud, Habib Kayruz, Fu'ad al-Sa'd, Najah Wakim, 'Abd-al-Latif al-Zayn, Muhammad Yusuf Baydun, Talal Arslan, Zahir al-Khatib, Sa'id al-As'ad, Eli Skaf, Muhammad Qabbani, 'Ali al-Khalil, Manuel Yunis, Jean 'Ubadyd, Hagop Jokhadrian, and Basim al-Sab'. Deputies Nabil al-Bustani, Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, Fathi Yakan, Sa'ud Rufayil, and Muhammad Yaghi lost.

The session was adjourned for lunch and then resumed at 1515. Speaker Birri announced during the recess the following outcome of elections for the public works, agriculture, tourism, and education committees:

- Public Works Committee: Marwan Abu-Fadil, 'Abdallah al-Rasi, Ayman Shuqayr, Ghassan al-Ashqar, Talal al-Mar'ibi, Habib Hakim, Usamah Fakhuri, Muhammad Baydun, Ilyas al-Khazin, Muhammad Qabbani, Nadim Salim, Yahya Shams, Ahmad 'Ajami, 'Ali 'Id, Fu'ad al-Sa'd, 'Ala'-al-Din Tarru, and Yaghia Djerjian.
- Agriculture and Tourism Committee: Khalil al-Harawi, Wajih al-Ba'rini, Antoine Khalil, Munir al-Hujayri, Salim Habib, 'Imad Jabir, Asmar Asmar, Eli

Skaf, Hagop Jokhadrian, Yusuf al-Ma'luf, Sulayman Kan'an, and Samir 'Awn.

- Education Committee: Manuel Yunis, Faysal al-Dawud, Bahiyah al-Hariri, Robert Ghanim, Ibrahim Bayan, Fayiz Ghushayn, Ahmad Suwayd, Nayilah Mu'awwad, 'Abd-al-Rahim Murad, Ghassan al-Ashqar, 'Ali Mita, and Habib Sadiq.
- Defense Committee: Akram Shuhayb, Najah Wakim, Sami al-Khatib, Soren Khan Amirian, Istifan al-Duwayhi, Wajih al-Ba'rini, Faysal al-Dawud, Basim al-Sab', 'Ali 'Ammar, Michel Khuri, Mansur al-Bawn, Muhammad al-Burjawi, Rashid al-Khazin, Ayyub Humayd, Samir 'Azar, Mahmud Tabbu, and Mustafa Sa'd.
- Economy, Industry, and Oil Committee: Pierre Hilu, Salim Sa'adah, George Qasarji, Nabil al-Bustani, Muhammad Ra'd, Muhammad Burjawi, Ayman Shuqayr, Yusuf al-Ma'luf, Zuhayr al-'Ubaydi, Ahmad 'Ajami, Mahmud Tabbu, and Yaghia Djerjian.
- Labor Committee: 'Imad Jabir, Khadr Tulays, 'Ali 'Id, 'Adnan Tarabulusi, Yahya Shams, Rabi'ah Kayruz, Michel Musa, 'Ala'-al-Din Tarru, Robert Ghanim, As'ad Harmush, and Maha al-Khuri As'ad.
- Health Committee: 'Ali Ammar, 'Abdallah al-Rasi, Mahmud 'Awwad, Usamah Fakhuri, Michel Musa, Sulaymn Kan'an, Jean Ghanim, Asmar Asmar, Sa'id al-As'ad, Riyad Sarraf, Norjian Demerjian, and Munir al-Hujayri.
- Information and Post Committee: Ghassan Matar, Istifan al-Duwayhi, Muhammad Funaysh, Samir 'Awn, Ayyub Humayd, Qabalan 'Isa al-Khuri, Hasan 'Alawiyah, Marwan Abu-Fadil, George Dib Ni'mah, 'Adnan Tarabulusi, Rashid al-Khazin, and Habib Sadiq.
- Planning, Development, and Reconstruction Committee: Khatchik Babikian, Sayid 'Aql, 'Abd-al-Rahim Murad, 'Adnan Tarabulusi, Muhammad Funaysh, Bahiyah al-Hariri, Antoine Khalil, 'Ali Taha, Muhammad Baydun, Habib Hakim, and Rashid al-Khazin.
- Internal Constitution Committee: Joseph Mughayzil, Zahir al-Khatib, Salih al-Khayr, Riyad Abi-Fadil, Qabalan 'Isa al-Khuri, Muhammad Kabbarah, Ahmad Suwayd, and Ghassan Matar.

Committee Chairmen

The Appeals Committee elected Bakhus as chairman and Kabbarah as rapporteur; the Finance Committee elected al-Harawi as chairman and Sa'adah as rapporteur; the Administration and Justice Committee elected Bakhus as chairman and Nu'man as rapporteur; the Foreign Affairs Committee elected al-Hafiz as chairman and 'Ubayd as rapporteur; the Public Works Committee elected al-Sa'd as chairman and Shams as rapporteur; the Information Committee elected Humayd as chairman and Matar as rapporteur; the Labor Committee elected 'Adil Jabir as chairman and Tarru as rapporteur; the Education Committee elected Bahiyah al-Hariri as chairwoman and Robert Ghanim as rapporteur; and the Agriculture and Tourism Committee elected al-Ba'rini as chairman and Jokhadrian as rapporteur.

OMAN

Government Expands Assembly's Legislative Powers*93AE0115B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
20 Oct 92 p 4*

[Article by Husayn 'Abd-al-Ghani]

[Text] The Omani Government has confirmed the wide legislative powers the Consultative Assembly enjoys and stressed its desire to cooperate with the assembly speaker's office and staff. Fahd Bin-Mahmud al-Sa'id, deputy prime minister for legal affairs and cabinet controller, quoted Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id as saying that he is anxious to reinforce this experiment and to "develop it so as to serve the aspirations of the coming generations."

This remark is a confirmation of what well-informed sources told AL-HAYAH—that the method of selecting Assembly members and the scope of the Assembly powers will be expanded in light of the outcome of the experiment that reflects the aspirations of the new, educated generation that has studied abroad and at home, in order to ensure greater political participation in Oman.

The Omani Government and the Consultative Assembly's office (which consists of the Assembly speaker and seven members and enjoys wide powers in administering the Assembly's work) have held the first meeting for coordination between them. This meeting was one of two meetings held annually aimed at coordinating the government's plans with the views of the Assembly and the citizens' aspirations.

The sources said the powers granted to the Assembly include proposing legislation and new laws or amending existing ones, in addition to passing laws submitted by the government, all of which makes coordination necessary. The earlier Assembly sessions—the Assembly holds four sessions each year, in January, March, May, and October—have resulted in several observations being made by the Assembly members and its five specialized committees regarding the performance of certain ministries and have put forth certain ideas for solving problems concerning public services and the citizen's daily life.

Despite the fact that Assembly Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-'Ali al-Qatbi praised the government's response to all the Assembly's demands for information and clarification, it is expected that the two sides will confirm the need for more facilities that will enable the Assembly and its members to seek information from government departments.

This meeting was held less than a week before the opening of the Assembly's fourth session on 24 October, at which important economic and social issues will be discussed, including the question of allocation [takhsis] (the sale of government shares to the private sector). The Assembly is expected to request speeding up completion of this process. A special ministerial committee was set up for this purpose five years ago. Members of the Assembly economic committee, headed by a prominent businessman,

met with Muscat stock market officials and specified certain private sector companies with which the allocation operation is to begin and to offer their shares for public subscription. These companies are: the Port Services Institute, the Omani Mills Company, the National Omani Insurance Company, and the Gulf Hotels Company.

The Assembly will also discuss the question of public education and acceptance at higher education institutes, including the limited number of people accepted by the National University (Sultan Qabus University) and the decreasing number of scholarships abroad.

In accordance with the Assembly's power to summon ministers to appear before it and provide information regarding their ministries' work—a process that began in the earlier session by summoning the ministers of information, health, trade, and industry—the Assembly, whose session will begin in a few days' time, will summon the ministers of education, electricity and water, and housing.

Sources said a heated debate is expected because of the confidence that the Assembly members gained in the first "encounter" with the ministers in the previous session and because of the fact that questions of education, electricity, water, and housing concern the level of services and the citizens' daily life, particularly citizens who reside outside of Muscat, which receives the lion's share of these services.

TV Carries Assembly Hearing on Projects*93AE0115B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Oct 92 p 4*

[Text] Muscat—The Omani Consultative Assembly's exercise of wide legislative powers to summon ministers to appear before it to answer questions regarding their ministries' policies has confirmed the principle of openness toward public opinion and reinforced popular participation in decision making in the Sultanate of Oman.

The Assembly last week witnessed the questioning of three ministers: Minister of Education Yahya al-Manthiri, Minister of Electricity and Water Muhammad Bin-'Ali al-Qutbi, and Minister of Housing Malik Bin-Sulayman al-Ma'mari. Each of the ministers made a comprehensive statement about his ministry's achievements, plans, and policies. Then each minister answered questions by the Assembly members (59 members) in sessions lasting an average of six hours.

Oman television and radio relay of the meetings and discussions generated a widespread reaction on all the popular and official levels. It also confirmed the government's resolve to submit its projects and plans to public opinion, to monitor reactions, and to gauge the response to these plans and programs, all of which will enable the government to generate the widest possible awareness of the social and economic development process in Omani society.

The current session of the Omani Consultative Assembly is the fourth and final session of the year. The Assembly began exercising its powers to summon ministers and to supervise their policies in the third session. The Assembly

had then summoned the ministers of information, health, trade, and industry. This step has been welcomed by the citizens, who expressed their admiration for the atmosphere of frankness, amity, and mutual respect that characterized the members' dialogue with the ministers.

But the citizens have been critical of a large number of deputies repeating questions that have already been answered, confining their questions to narrow issues of concern only to the provinces they represent, and speaking at length and in detail, which sometimes evolved into an argument with the ministers for no purpose other than showing off in front of the public that is following the debate on the small screen. Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-'Ali al-Qutbi intervened several times, asking the deputies to put their questions directly and without elaboration in order to give the others a chance to ask their questions. He intervened even more strongly when the deputies ignored the request to ask questions directly. Some deputies yielded their right to speak in order to help reduce the duration of meetings, which sometimes last seven hours.

The sources that AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT interviewed were unanimous in saying that the Omani Consultative Assembly's experiment of involving public opinion in its debate has been greatly successful. Although some failings may appear, such as departure from the subject, repetitive questions, and some deputies failing to familiarize themselves with the subject under discussion, these will rectify themselves.

QATAR

Aluminum Mill To Be Built for \$1.5 Billion

93AE0116A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
1 Nov 92 p 9

[Report from Doha by Suzanne Tarbush: "Decision To Be Made Within Months on \$1.4 Billion Aluminum Smelter"]

[Text] Qatari Minister of Energy and Industry 'Abdallah Bin-Hamad al-'Attiyah told AL-HAYAH that the Qatari General Petroleum Authority expects to complete within the next two or three months a feasibility study for an aluminum smelter in Qatar. He added that the facility is extremely important because it would cost \$1.5 billion.

The idea for a smelter has popped up several times in recent years, and more than one preliminary agreement was reached with groups of companies that would have undertaken financing and implementation. The agreements, however, failed to produce specific proposals, even though the Qatari Company for Transition Industries had submitted to the Qatari General Petroleum Authority a study it made on the feasibility of aluminum smelting.

Minister al-'Attiyah pointed out that aluminum price fluctuations made planning the project difficult and that prices were high two years ago, but have now declined.

Al-'Attiyah joined the cabinet early last September, when he was entrusted with the newly created energy and industry portfolio. The functions of the new ministry were previously handled by the former Ministries of Finance and Petroleum and Industry and Public Works.

Minister al-'Attiyah said that it made more sense to create a ministry with competence in both the energy and industrial sectors at a time when natural gas is playing a major role in shaping the future of Qatar. Future industries in Qatar will largely depend on natural gas as the primary industrial fuel. Gas is extracted from the Northern Field, considered to be the largest such facility in the world.

Minister al-'Attiyah, who is also chairman of the Qatari General Petroleum Authority, said: "This means that we currently have a direct link between the ministry and the authority in a manner that ensures their cooperation and mutual support and minimizes bureaucratic red tape."

Qatar has so far founded two liquefied natural gas companies. The first is the Qatar Gas Company, which suffered a setback early this year when the British Petroleum withdrew from the project. Since then, Mobil Oil has been negotiating for a share of the Qatar Gas Company and for building a liquefied natural gas facility in partnership with the Qatari General Petroleum Authority.

The Qatar Gas Company produces 6 million tons of gas a year. The other facility, which Mobil proposes to build in cooperation with the Qatari General Petroleum Authority, will have an initial annual capacity of 4 million tons and a potential annual capacity of 10 million tons.

Minister al-'Attiyah said that agreement will be reached with Mobil Oil in the next two to three weeks on its share of the Qatar Gas Company and on its joint project with the Petroleum Authority.

The second firm is EuroGas whose board of directors is to hold its first meeting this week. Minister al-'Attiyah added that when British Petroleum withdrew, rumors circulated that the Qatar Gas Company was threatened, "but those conclusions were erroneous."

Qatar currently seeks to introduce broad changes to its basic industries. Some observers have expressed doubt that such major changes and projects could be implemented, but Minister al-'Attiyah is optimistic that they will all be carried out.

The minister, who is keen on supporting small and medium-sized Qatari industries, said that his ministry is about to complete a study on small and medium-sized industries to be undertaken by the private sector.

He also pointed out that a commission is studying the feasibility of creating an industrial bank that would support small and medium-sized industries. The commission, composed of representatives of the Qatari Monetary Agency and of the ministries of Finance and Economy, Trade, and Energy and Industry, will complete its study in six months. The industrial bank is scheduled to begin operations next year.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Six Wounded in Incident at Omani Border*93AE0107B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
10 Nov p 1*

[Text] London—An incident that occurred in the border area between the United Arab Emirates [UAE] and the Sultanate of Oman the day before yesterday resulted in six persons being wounded.

The incident took place in the border area between al-Shariqah Emirate and the Sultanate of Oman. Reports on the implications of the incident have been conflicting. Some inhabitants said a dispute broke out when road construction workers entered from Daba al-Bay'ah, a town belonging to Oman, into territory near Daba al-Husn, which belongs to the UAE. An ensuing argument led to the intervention of the Omani police. It was said that the shooting resulted in six persons being injured, two of whom were security officers.

The incident caused tension in the area. Other sources said that further shooting occurred despite efforts to pacify the situation.

REUTERS said one person was killed in a clash between inhabitants of the area, but official sources would not confirm this information.

Projected Draft Budget at \$5.5 Billion*93AE0107A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
10 Nov 92 p 11*

[Article by Shafiq al-Asadi]

[Text] Abu Dhabi—Ahmad al-Tayir, United Arab Emirates [UAE] minister of state for financial affairs and industry, said his ministry will submit the projected federal budget for 1993 to the cabinet within the next week. Ministry sources said the projected budget proposed by the ministries is more than 20 billion dirhams (\$5.5 billion), but it is not certain that the cabinet will approve this figure, judging by the cabinet's attitude toward last year's draft budget and by the fact that no new developments occurred to prod the government to approve a budget increase over last year's. The sources said the budget revenues, which are a basic factor in determining the final figure for 1993 budget, are not much different from its 1992 revenues in view of the stability of crude oil prices, which constitute about 90 percent on the UAE's national income. Consequently, the UAE's oil revenues hardly increased.

Al-Tayir said the draft budget includes proposals submitted by the ministries and independent federal government bodies. The cabinet will review these proposals and issue directives based on them.

The sources said the cabinet's discussion of the draft budget will be preliminary. The cabinet is expected to return the draft budget to the Finance Ministry once again in order to reduce the budget allocations in consultation with the ministries that will be affected by the reduction.

The cabinet had returned the 1992 draft budget to the Ministry of Finance in order to reduce the general total of the draft budget, which is 19.9 billion dirhams, an increase of 3.5 billion dirhams over 1991 budget, with a deficit of about 4.2 billion dirhams.

UAE Minister of Finance and Industry Shaykh Hamdan Bin-Rashid expects the current available financial revenues that finance the general expenditures for fiscal 1993 to remain within the same limits of financing of the 1993 [presumably 1992] budget. He said any improvement in financial revenues will be directed toward meeting overdue financial obligations toward others and toward balancing the budget by reducing the deficit.

WESTERN SAHARA

Socioeconomic Situation; Status of Polisario Seen*93AF0118A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
7-13, 14-20, 21-27 Oct 92*

[7-13 Oct pp 20-24]

[Text] During the Organization of African Unity summit in June 1981, King Hassan II of Morocco, in spite of his assertion of the unity of Morocco and as result of the insistence of some of the African leaders, agreed to a referendum to determine the destiny of the Saharan region that Morocco had regained after the Green March in 1975. He thought that the referendum would not only affirm on a national level that the Sahara is Moroccan, but that it would also affirm this on an international level because there are 74 countries that have recognized the so-called Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic formed in exile by Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] organization.

After a decade, there are still many problems that hinder the referendum, which the United Nations is trying to hold by the end of this year. The main point of disagreement is the lists of the eligible participants and is considered to be a deliberate delay on the part of Polisario. In spite of the fact that the bloody conflict between the Polisario and Moroccan forces, which lasted for more than 16 years, has neared its end, the collapse of the communist camp and the decrease in aid to the Polisario, the change in Algeria's position on the issue, and the development of a new world order have created new conditions that have contributed to pushing the Polisario to the point that even its leaders and military commanders are jumping ship and returning to Morocco, as a result of the royal pardon. It has been said that if the blockade on the Tindouf camps was lifted, everyone would leave within 24 hours. In this issue and the next two issues of this magazine, we will be reporting from Rabat and Aaiun Saguia el Hamra on the background of the conflict and the chances for a solution whether the referendum takes place or not. Some of the Saharan citizens participated in the referendum to amend the Moroccan Constitution. The amended constitution was approved by an overwhelming majority, a fact that could be considered a referendum that demonstrates that the Sahara is Moroccan.

Complications of Strategy Reflect on Saharan Issue

After a night at el Mesera hotel in el Aaiun, the Saharan capital, during which I slept few hours around dawn, the phone rang. It was my Saharan friend Mohamed Bedali, who came early to escort me to Dechra camp. In his Hassaniya dialect, which is close to the desert dialect in the East, he asked: "Did you sleep well?" I said: "To hell with the MINURSO [UN Mission for the Organization of a Referendum in Western Sahara] men and women, but I slept very well in your unpolluted air. The air here is very clean. A few hours would be enough." In the elevator, I met a young Egyptian man who works as a technician with MINURSO, he said that they are always like that on Thursday nights. They come back from their sessions in the observation points at the security wall built by the Moroccan Army to keep Polisario members away and to get ready to spend their leave in Agadir or in other towns. After living in the sand with the wolves and jackals in very difficult situations, they feel very happy to be in a civilized place like this hotel, where they have a party until dawn.

The countdown for settling the conflict began on 17 May 1991, the 18th anniversary of the formation Polisario, which was originally established to resist Spanish occupation in the Sahara—before it had any ideas about separatism. On 17 May 1991, the UN General Assembly approved the secretary general's plan, which the Secretary General had adopted on 19 April. The plan has been in the works since 1988, when the Secretary General appointed a special representative to the negotiations between Moroccan and Polisario for the timetable for the referendum. The plan is complicated and includes the registration of qualified voters by an "identification verification" committee, the return the refugees to their country to participate in the referendum, an exchange of prisoners of war, a cease-fire supervised by MINURSO, and supervision of the referendum. The international arrangements were supposed to begin in August 1990, but some changes had to be made because of the Gulf crisis. A cease-fire was agreed upon and went into effect under MINURSO in September 1991. MINURSO headquarters are in el Aaiun, and the forces are under the command of General Luis Block of Peru [forces now commanded by Belgian Colonel Andre Van Baelen]. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, the new UN secretary general, appointed Yaqub Khan to be his personal envoy on this issue. The disagreements over the lists of qualified voters postponed the referendum, and a new date has not been announced. It is anticipated that the issue will be settled one way or another by the end of this year because King Hassan II had decided not to hold parliamentary elections, which were supposed to take place two years ago according to the Constitution, until the Sahara issue is settled. Municipal elections took place on 16 October, and the parliamentary elections are expected to be held by the end of this year.

We continued to pass through the streets of el Aaiun, which is also called Aaiun Saguia el Hamra to distinguish it from many others in the Sahara, heading toward a bridge across Saguia el Hamra. Saguia el Hamra is a wide valley through which the water flows during the winter and

becomes scarce during the summer. The first house in the city was built in 1937. The city was built to be a Spanish garrison about 20 km from the Atlantic Ocean. When the Spanish left Saguia el Hamra, the only signs of civilization were military barracks, houses built to withstand the sandstorms, and three schools that were exclusively for the children of the Spanish community. Today, el Aaiun, despite its simplicity and scarce resources, is a semi-integrated city, thanks to the Moroccan investments. Lotfi Marrakechi, deputy Minister of Education in Saguia el Hamra region told us that it currently has 24 elementary schools that serve about 20,000 students, half of whom are girls; nine preparatory schools for about 7,000 students; and three secondary schools for 1,123 registered students this year. Education is the only field that has a non-Saharan element, said Salah Zamrak, governor of the province. About 95 percent of the jobs in other fields are occupied by natives of the province who are also employed in the other six provinces of Morocco.

Battle of Dcheira

We drove in a narrow paved road for about 30 km. Alambi Baba, a Saharan native who was wearing a black head-dress, was giving directions to the driver. When we arrived at Masib, to the west of Saguia el Hamra valley Alambi pointed across the wide valley and said in an emotional voice, "There is the site of the Battle of Dcheira."

The Battle of Dcheira took place on 16 June 1958. This battle left a big scar in the feelings of the Spanish people and a black spot in their military history. Alambi was 19 at the time, but he led a hundred men of the Moroccan Liberation Army. His men took positions in Dcheira, facing the 1st and 13th Brigades of the Spanish Army. Alambi's eyes roamed the battlefield. "First we occupied all the strategic places. The battle started at dawn, and nothing short of darkness halted it. It lasted for 12 hours, during which their six ambulances were busy nonstop carrying the casualties to el Aaiun. Around 2000, the rest of the enemy army was defeated and retreated shamefully to el Aaiun. They left behind a huge amount of weapons and ammunition. The next morning, we reached a position close to el Aaiun from which we shelled their barracks using our only mortar before we retreated quickly. We killed about 1,000 of their men, in addition to wounding many more." I told him that a Spanish military researcher had reported in the Spanish Army's magazine that the number of casualties in this battle was about 700. He said that this was a lie, because their casualties were double this number. When I asked him about Moroccan casualties, he said that 12 had died and three had been wounded slightly. I told him that it was a military miracle and asked him about who was their leader. He said Saleh Ben Issou was the Moroccan Army's provincial commander at the time. He said that the commander was a Moroccan and not from the Sahara and that he is currently a colonel in the Moroccan Army. The liberation army consisted of natives from all of the provinces, and Rabat supplied the training, weapons clothes and food."

The Moroccan Liberation Army won all of its battles against the Spanish Army in the Sahara, but Dcheira the

last one in which it was victorious. In spite of the traditional alienation between Madrid and Paris during the reign of Franco and in spite of the Spanish authorities' neutral position in the struggle between Saharan nationalist elements and the French occupation and its allowance of anti-French demonstrations in el Aaiun, the interests of the two countries coincided after the Battle of Dcheira to destroy the Liberation Army. The two countries adopted what came to be known as the wipe-out policy. Together, the French and the Spanish Armies managed to defeat the Moroccan Army and push it out of the area that was called Western Sahara in 1958.

At El Aaiun

In his office at el Aaiun, we met with Judge Maa Inein Larabas, the chief justice and chairman of the Saharan Royal Consultative Council. The Spanish occupation had arrested him and sentenced him to death, but the late King Mohamed V succeeded in exchanging him for a number of Spanish prisoners of war who had been captured by the liberation army. Judge Maa Inein has no doubt that the Sahara is Moroccan and that it was attached administratively and politically to Morocco for centuries before the French and Spanish occupation. Then the governors of the Sahara and the eastern regions next to Algeria had been appointed by Moroccan kings. The people of the Sahara have always been known to adhere to their allegiance to the Moroccan kings. In doing so, they have been following a saying of Prophet Muhammad, who said: "He who dies without an allegiance to a ruler, dies as a non-Muslim." During the reign of King Mohamed V, the Saharan region was under the rule of the sultan's khalifa in Tetouan, Moulay Khalifa Hassan el Mehdi, who used to appoint all of the officials in the region. The largest hospital in el Aaiun is named after him. When the French occupation forced King Mohamed V to abandon the throne and go into exile with his family and the crown prince in August 1953, the Saharan region revolted and declared national mourning. The religious scholars declared a jihad. As a result of this jihad, prayers were shortened, and religious celebrations were suspended. Resistance cells were formed to coordinate with the resistance in the rest of the kingdom. The liberation army did not attack the Spanish forces initially because Spain, according to Judge Maa Inein, did not approve of France's actions against King Mohamed V. He said: "They allowed us to give shelter to the personnel of the liberation army, who were persecuted by the French occupation in the north, and to publicly cooperate with them. That is why we did not attack the Spaniards for their support of the legitimate king, Mohamed V."

The Return of Mohamed V

The Sahara celebrated the return of King Mohamed V to his throne and the independence of the Kingdom. Delegations were sent to Rabat. Judge Maa Inein Larabas was a member of one of these delegations to renew the allegiance of the Sahara to the King. During the meeting, King Mohamed V told the delegations that he would work for the liberation of the Moroccan land. This statement was the incentive for the Moroccan Liberation Army, with all

of its elements from both the Sahara and the North, to resume its activities against the Spanish occupation and to achieve numerous victories, until the battle at Dcheira. The Judge added: "In war, you win some, and you lose some. We were victorious in all of our battles against Spanish occupation. The Spaniards were forced out of Tan-tan and Tarfaya by the Moroccan Liberation Army. If it were not for the "wipe-out" agreement between the Spanish and the French, they would not have stayed for long and the Sahara issue would have been solved."

The consequences of the wipe-out agreement are still affecting the Sahara issue. Judge Maa Inein adds: "As a result of the cooperation between the Spanish and French Armies to defeat the Moroccan Liberation Army and to stand against the people of the Sahara, very few inhabitants remained in the region. Many of the people were displaced. Some were exiled or expelled. About 80 percent of the population left the Sahara. In the 1974 census, the Spanish counted 74,000 residents, excluding all of the displaced and the expelled. That is the reason Morocco is asking to include all of the people from the Sahara in the ballot lists for the referendum on self-determination." To facilitate this issue, many of the families that left the Sahara as a result of the 1957 and 1958 incidents have returned to live in a specially set-up camp near el Aaiun. According to Salah Zamrak, governor of el Aaiun, some of the Saharans have called for setting up a trial for the Spaniards who supervised the 1974 census. Brika Zerouali, who represents el Aaiun region in the legislature, said: "In obedience to King Hassan II, we accepted the principle of the referendum on self-determination. The United Nations specified steps for the referendum: a cease-fire, the preparation of the lists, the referendum, and the solution of the problem. There was a cease-fire, and we started to prepare the lists, but we discovered that the lists of the Spanish census do not include any of the names of the Saharan nationals. I was born in el Aaiun, went to school there, got a job there, and fought in the liberation army, but my name is not on the lists that the Spaniards prepared. Morocco asked for all of the Saharans to be registered so that they could perform their duty and participate in the referendum. Polisario was not against this principle until last June. When we prepared our lists, they refused this principle because they realized that they have no support after the collapse of the eastern camp, Cuba's failure to support them, Libya's conviction that it was on the wrong track, and the collapse of Boumediene's regime in Algeria. These events were followed by the disintegration of the leadership and the return to the motherland."

Gajmoula Bint Abi, a former member of the political bureau of Polisario and chairwoman of the Women's Association in the region, returned from Spain to Marek as a result of the royal amnesty decree issued by King Hassan II. She said: "The Polisario had no intention of accepting the referendum. They know that it would be the last nail in their coffin." Why did Gajmoula and tens of other people escape from the Polisario hell?

[14-20 Oct pp 36-40]

Royal Decree Creates Employment Opportunities for Saharan Youth

[Text] In 1985, King Hassan II of Morocco visited the Sahara, and the Moroccan Parliament held a special session in el Aaiun. During this visit, the king cautioned the Saharans against the rumors that Morocco wants the Sahara because of its riches. During his meeting with a delegation from the Royal Consultative Council for Saharan Affairs in Skhirat Palace near Rabat last September to talk to granting the Sahara priority in the new system of decentralization, al-Jahawiyah, which is still under study, the Moroccan monarch said that if the Sahara has more resources than it needs, the surplus will be directed to other regions. If the Sahara has less, its needs would be met by other regions. Currently, resources are very scarce in the Sahara, which means that Rabat will support the region even if the economic decisions made locally, in accordance with the decentralized system.

For the past 17 years, this obligation has changed the economic and social nature of the region to such an extent that it has become difficult to imagine that it could be severed again from Morocco. This obligation was also among the incentives for hundreds of the Polisario leaders—founders, as well as political and military officers—to listen to the appeal issued by King Hassan II, who said that the country is all-forgiving and compassionate and that they should return to the motherland, away from the Marxist Polisario, which has no place in today's world.

Santa Cruz is the capital of the Tenerife, one of the Spanish Canary Islands (also known as the Immortal Islands) situated in the Atlantic Ocean, across from Sahara. The distance between the island and the closest point in the Sahara is less than the distance between Rabat and Casablanca, which is about 100 km. It has a smooth sandy resort beach that extends for about 2 km and that is always full of tourists. There is nothing strange about that, except that the island is almost surrounded by black volcanic rocks. A island guide gives the following explanation of this phenomenon to the tourists who throng to the island during the warm winter. He said that General Franco wanted to reward the inhabitants of this island for their support, so he ordered a resort built on the island. Smooth sand was brought by ships from Western Sahara, which was a Spanish protectorate. It took about a decade to bring the sand for the resort. It is strange to note that Saharan sand is still regularly exported to the Canary Islands to be used in construction and for setting up resort beaches. These exports provide the region with a regular, although small, income.

The geographic proximity of the Sahara and the Canary Islands was one of the main reasons that prompted Franco to declare the region a Spanish governorate in July 1958 and attempt to hold to it in spite of the diplomatic pressures exerted by Rabat on Madrid after the end of the European occupation of Africa. The Spanish presence in the Sahara provided a defensive depth for the Islands, which are geographically distant from the rest Spain, and guarantees Spain a complete dominance over the rich

fisheries across the Saharan coast. It also guarantees Spain the use of the phosphate mines discovered in 1963 in Bu Craa area, which is located about 100 km southeast of the Port of Playa del Aaiun. Spain withdrew from the region on 31 December 1975. Morocco and Mauritania entered the region, but Mauritania withdrew from the Sahara, and the area it occupied became the fourth Moroccan territory in the Saharan region.

Economic Resources

The production of the phosphate plant in Playa del Aaiun, 20 km west of Aaiun Saguia el Hamra, is the most important economic resource in the region even though its output is not more than 3 percent of total Moroccan production, according to mine officials. The mine is not operating at capacity because of the stagnation of the world market for phosphate. The raw phosphate is transported from Bu Craa to the plant by means of conveyor belt that is powered 10 ten electric power stations, a method that the plant officials consider very expensive. The phosphate is then washed by water from a desalination plant, sorted, and then stored before being exported to the international markets from a unique platform that extends 3 km into the ocean. This platform is 17 meters deep and can accommodate ships with capacities of up to 60,000 tons.

This platform is not used for any other commercial or logistic purposes. In addition to the security situation during the conflict with Polisario, the Spaniards' failure to build any infrastructure in the Saharan region, leaving it without any modern ports, is the reason for the region's relative isolation and the complexity of developing it. The region only has two civil airports in el Aaiun and Dakhla, it also has about 500 km of paved roads, according to the annual statistics of the British magazine NEW STATESMAN, and 6,100 km of unpaved roads. Commercial and a fishing boat ports are currently being built in Playa del Aaiun to facilitate import and export activities, especially the exports of the rich fisheries. Officials told us that the government intends to build similar ports 100 km apart along the Saharan coast.

The phosphate plant employs 1,485 workers and 15 engineers, most of whom are from the Sahara, even though the region was left without any technically skilled people in 1975 because the three regional schools during the Spanish occupation were exclusively for Spaniards. The Saharans were not allowed to learn Arabic, but for different reasons. Local education consisted only in the form of religious elementary schools in which the percentage of registered female students was very small. The rate of female illiteracy here was among the highest in the world. Lotfi Marrakechi, deputy minister for national education in the region, told us that the government's interest in vocational training and literacy campaigns, especially among women, has reached such a level that the branches of every ministry in the region are conducting their own vocational training and literacy campaign classes, including the Ministry of Youth and Sports, which supervises its own literacy campaign classes. Thanks to the education boom in the region, it was possible to employ 20,000 Saharan youths in government offices on the national level through the Hassan II

Corporation for the Youth. The royal decree to open the employment opportunities for all of the Saharans in Morocco led to enhancing the social aspect of national unity.

Organic Integration

Many observers of the Moroccan arena think that this organic integration between the Saharan region and the motherland is one of the main reasons that Polisario leaders gave up their attempts to persuade the Saharans to support the Marxist regime in the referendum. This integration is also the reason that hundreds of the Polisario officials took advantage of the general amnesty decree issued by King Hassan II. In a speech, the king said: "The country is all-forgiving and compassionate." Among the Polisario leaders that returned to Morocco are Ibrahim Hakim Darwish, former Polisario foreign minister; Gajmoula Bint Abi, former member of the political bureau of Polisario and chairwoman of the Women's Association; Moulay Ould Abbas (real name: Salem Ould Abbas), former Polisario air-defense commander in charge of SAM-6, SAM-7, SAM-8, and SAM-9 missiles; Moustafa Birzany (nom de guerre for Abdallah Ould Bou), former member of the political bureau; Noureddine Bilaly, one of the Polisario founders and the organizer of its first conference; and three members of the political bureau, Mohamed Takiddine Maa Inein, Bachir Ould Abdallah Ould Khaled, and Fadly Saleck. The actual return of Polisario leaders to Morocco began in 1989 when Omar Hadrami (real name: Mohamed Ali Admi), one of the six founders of Polisario in 1973, returned to Morocco after being convinced that it was high time to talk and negotiate. Hadrami had held many sensitive positions in international relations, and he managed to secure the recognition for the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic from many countries. He was a member of the supreme command of the Saharan Liberation Army until 1982, and he was in direct contact with the Algerian authorities. For six years, he supervised the Saharan Military Institution. The Moroccan considered the situation hopeless; he had his doubts about the use of continuation and legitimacy of the armed struggle. Other members of Polisario supported him and formed an unofficial opposition in 1988, when the original Saharans accused the Saharans of Mauritanian and Algerian descent of monopolizing power. As a result of this conflict with Polisario, he and many of his supporters were arrested and held prisoner in a camp in the Sahara. Early in 1989, he was released and sent as a representative to North America. He took advantage of one of the holidays to return to Morocco. He was followed by three other, less-important leaders from Polisario, Bilaly Ould Bachir, Mohamed Moustafa Maa Inein (nom de guerre: Murabih Rabu), and Bourkiny Ould Ahmed Zein. The influx of Polisario leaders became much greater after the amnesty.

Other Reasons

There are many other reasons for the disintegration of Polisario. The most important reasons are the end of the Cold War; the collapse of the communist camp; decreasing external aid, especially from Cuba; and the change in Algeria's position from Boumediene-era policy of having

an outlet to the ocean. Even President Boumediene had his doubts about the use of such a strategy, according to Driss Basri, interior minister of Morocco. While he was driving us from Rabat to Skhirat Palace, the summer residence of the Moroccan Monarch, he said that the change in Algeria's position was for political reasons rather than financial or strategic ones. He said: "Boumediene had been trying to meet with His Majesty since 1977. The meeting was supposed to take place in Belgium. Had it not been for Boumediene's illness, the meeting would have taken place and the matter would have been solved. Algeria has many interests in the area, both as a country and also institutionally. It tried to retain it, but the country's position regarding the Sahara started to change in 1980 for three important reasons. First, the Eastern Bloc began deteriorate and disintegrate. Second, Algeria, after the restoration of its independence and unity, started to recognize that its approval of small countries, such as the Western Sahara, could be a dangerous precedent that threatened the unity of Algeria itself. Third, the Algerians wanted to establish the Arab Maghreb. After realizing the extent to which the King, government, and people of Morocco were interested in the Sahara, Algeria popularly and officially started to doubt the use of supporting 40,000 or 50,000 Saharans if the result would be the loss of the brotherhood and friendship of 27 million Moroccans.

What is the reason that kept Algeria from taking a decisive position?

Minister Basri said that it was merely the result of an internal situation. The Algerians needed some time to sort out the situation without doing any harm, either domestically or on the international level. One month before the return of Ibrahim Hakim, Polisario's former Foreign Minister, to his country, Algerian Defense Minister Khaled Nezzar held a meeting with some Polisario officials and told them: "Algeria is no longer able to help you. Go to your brothers the Moroccans and find a solution there."

Basri thinks that Algeria no longer holds the cards for solving the problem, which has become an international one. We told the Moroccan Minister of Interior that the Algerian President 'Ali Kafi had accepted an invitation to visit Morocco. We asked him if a solution to this problem would be reached during the visit. He replied: "Algeria is just a member of the international community, and Morocco would accept negotiations with Algeria. We accepted the UN decision to have a referendum." The Algerians told us that they are committed to the referendum and would respect the decision of the Saharans.

Former Polisario Foreign Minister Ibrahim Hakim returned to the motherland last August. AL-MAJALLAH was the first to learn from Basri that Hakim had been appointed a Moroccan ambassador at-large. Hakim told us that Algeria believes the solution to the Sahara problem has to come from Morocco. He added: "Mr. Boudiaf told me that the solution to the Polisario issue is not an issue of refugees and militia, but that of an army. He advised us to talk to the Moroccans. Since the reign of former President Chadli, the Algerians have tried to abandon their responsibilities whenever there is any tension in the country.

They have repeatedly told us that we did every thing possible to end this problem. This year, the Algerians stopped supporting Polisario and severed all communications, including telephone, telex, and fax—even fuel and medicine. They did not give anything, not even an aspirin pill. Their financial help was reduced to less than half it used to be.”

Ibrahim Hakim added that the Sahara issue is being used by powers that are not looking out for Arab interests within the new world order. These powers do not want the Arab Maghreb to unite and become stable. The former foreign minister of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic said that the aid from the so-called European humanitarian organizations increased soon after the development of the idea of Maghreb unity. Since all of the traditional aid stopped from Cuba in 1991, Polisario now depends on aid for the refugees in Tindouf. Before that, even all of the wounded were treated in Cuba, Libya, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Although the number of the people in the Tindouf camps is about 30,000 to 40,000 refugees, Polisario claimed that there were 160,000 refugees so that it could obtain more humanitarian aid, which it could then sell on the black market to finance its military operations. Zamrak told us that the black market created a commercial activity in southern Algeria and was one of the reasons that Algeria has allowed Polisario to remain within its borders. He said that the surplus was being sold in Mauritania.

Corruption in the Humanitarian Organization

After fleeing from the Polisario and spending a year in Spain before her return to Morocco, Gajmoula Bint Abi exposed the corruption in the humanitarian organizations in Europe and contacted the European Parliament, but the aid never stopped. Hakim said that those who collect aid in Europe for Polisario get a percentage from it and it is to their advantage to collect as much as possible. Gajmoula, who was born in the Sahara and went to school in el Aaiun, joined the Polisario in 1975, when she was 14. She was trained in Cuba and held high positions in the organization. In her capacity as the chairwoman of the Women's Association, she attended many international women's conferences. She had wide international contacts through these organizations. Like Omar Hadrami, she started to have her doubts about the objectives of Polisario when the 1988 internal struggle resulted in her leaving the country and in the imprisonment of her father.

Gajmoula said: “Polisario's leadership deceived us. They took us from our homes and land to the desert, where we suffered a great deal. All of this was to satisfy a certain group of people who pretended to be leaders and wanted to be important in the international arena. These people do not want any settlement. They want to continue giving speeches and obtaining international aid.” When Gajmoula returned to Morocco she continued her contacts with the international associations and organizations in an attempt to break Polisario's siege on the Saharan refugee camps in Tindouf. She exposed the truth about the conditions in the camps and the disastrous situation of the people there, particularly women, children and the elderly, whom she considered hostages. She told us: “I am sure that

if the siege is lifted for 24 hours, nobody would stay there. They would all return home.”

Moroccan News Agency

At Moroccan News Agency, seven new defectors, including three Polisario founders, held a press conference in which they talked about their firsthand experience with the situation in Tindouf, which has about 25 camps, each with about 400 tents. To have complete control over the camps and to prevent a collective exodus from them, Polisario set up guard posts located about 20 km away from the camps, followed by another belt of Algerian soldiers about 20 km further away. Polisario has its own informants who gather information about the families that refuse the demands of Mohamed Abdelaziz, president of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. In many cases, women are forced to spy on their husbands and children. According to Mohamed Takiddine Maa Inein, a two-time under secretary to the Polisario Minister of Interior, this totalitarian police set up reflects the Polisario's isolation since its cadres fled to the motherland.

While still being driven to Skhirat Palace, we asked Basri why the royal amnesty decree did not include Mohamed Abdelaziz and those who still surround him in Tindouf, so that he would take heed and return to his country and the whole problem would be solved without a referendum. Basri said: “The royal amnesty decree included everybody. Abdelaziz was born in Marrakech. As soon as he returns to Morocco, he will be covered by the amnesty decree as a Moroccan. The danger for him comes from those who are being held hostage in the camps as they start to notice that he is the stumbling block for the international arrangements to solve the Sahara problem. King Hassan II welcomes the return of Abdelaziz. The question is, would those whom he led toward displacement and danger allow him to return? This is the issue that he and those around him should answer.”

[21-27 Oct pp 44-49]

The Most Important Question in the Sahara: Referendum or No Referendum?

The number of those who qualify to participate in the referendum, according to the UN Security Council's peace plan that was adopted in April 1991, ranges between 70,000 and 300,000 people who live in the disputed region. This discrepancy in the estimates of the two parties is largely artificial, according to many Polisario leaders who returned to the motherland and exposed the strategy of the organization, which depends on impeding the referendum at all costs including violence, sabotage, and nearly impossible requests, such as the withdrawal of the army and the civil administration before the referendum in spite of the fact that more than one-fourth of the Moroccan Army in the Sahara are Saharans themselves and so is about 95 percent of the civil administration, with the exception of the field of education. It seems that Polisario leaders are sure that the result of the referendum would be the displacement of its population in the camps and subsequently its end as a political and military organization

especially after the changes in international circumstances and the Algerian's position on the issue.

Hajji Ibrahim Ould Douihi, chairman of the regional council at el Aaiun, is a veteran of the Moroccan Liberation Army. He was arrested with other resistance people, imprisoned, and exiled to Dakhla and then to the Canary Islands before the Spanish sentenced him to death. His life was saved as a result of a prisoner of war exchange between the Moroccans and the Spaniards. In a calm voice, he said: "A self-determination referendum is unnatural. We could call it a canned meal. Canned foods have an expiration date. The king specified its shelf-life by adding two years to the term of the previous parliament. This meal has outlived its expiration date and is no longer fit for use, especially because the Saharans tasted a real meal during the referendum to amend the Constitution on 4 September 1991. I think that there is no logical or legal basis for another referendum." Despite its bad taste, Hajji Ibrahim Ould Douihi accepts the referendum, particularly after the International Court of Justice in The Hague affirmed that the Sahara is Moroccan out of obedience to the King, who agreed at the Summit of the Organization of African Unity in Nairobi in 1981 to a referendum to prove to the world that the Sahara is Moroccan.

According to Salah Zamrak, governor of the region, Morocco initially refused the referendum because it felt that it would hurt its dignity. In his office in the Saharan capital, he said: "We do not want to have anything to do with a referendum in the Sahara region alone. We want a referendum in the whole country. A referendum only in the Sahara would hurt our dignity." According to many Moroccan leaders, the Sahara is not a Moroccan colony whose people want self-determination. It is part of the Moroccan land."

'Dotted the I's'

In Rabat, Minister Driss Basri is making sure that "all of the i's are dotted." The Saharans have participated in all the local, municipal, professional, and parliamentary elections and in the constitutional referendums, and even in the 1984 referendum on the unity with Libya. This practice has been going on since November 1976, when the restored land had its first elections.

We asked Basri about the significance of the participation of the Saharans in the referendum on amending the Constitution before the UN-sponsored referendum on self-determination. We asked whether the overwhelming majority that favored amendment was affirming that the Sahara is Moroccan and if, subsequently, this referendum could be used if the self-determination is not held for one reason or another?

He said: "There are two answers to your question. The first answer is an internal Moroccan answer: The constitutional referendum and its acceptance by the Saharans means that they accept that the Sahara is Moroccan, which is an internal matter. The second aspect is that Morocco has affirmed that the internal Moroccan elections or the referendum would not affect the international referendum.

Morocco is committed to holding a referendum on self-determination and will abide by its results."

Basri's affirmation that Morocco will abide by the results of the referendum that was supposed to take place in January 1992 reflects an absolute confidence that the result will affirm that the Sahara is Moroccan. He was not sure whether Polisario will yield to international will or continue to squabble over the lists of the voters, particularly because Polisario leaders who have returned to Morocco have said that the organization has never been serious because it knows that the result would not be in its favor.

The sides agreed to accept the Spanish census of 1974 as a basis for the referendum, but Morocco submitted lists containing an additional 120,000 names of Saharan refugees, many of whom settled in southern Morocco after the defeat of the Moroccan Liberation Army by a joint French and Spanish army and in later years when Morocco was pressured to give up the region. At the same time, Polisario has informed the United Nations that there are about 141,600 Saharan refugees in the Tindouf area. However, sources from the returning Polisario leaders have affirmed that the number of refugees ranges from 35,000 to 40,000. The former UN Secretary General had accepted most of the Moroccan demands to enlarge the lists of those qualified to participate in the referendum. The Moroccan authorities facilitated the return of many Saharan refugees to participate in the referendum.

Khattat Ould Ahmed Ould Yanja, one of the Polisario leaders who returned to Morocco last month, was a member in the Polisario referendum committee that worked with the UN forces, he said that the nature of Polisario's strategy in dealing with the referendum depends on maneuvering and deceit aimed at attempting to prevent the referendum. He said that after the 1988 incidents in the Tindouf camps, the organization's leaders have become sure that the refugees under its control would vote, given the chance, for unity with Morocco. He added that the most important issue for Polisario leadership has become continuing the status-quo, that is, continuing to have the camps on Algerian soil to remain in power.

Selouk Memorandum

Khattat Ould Ahmed Ould Yanja added that when Polisario realized that the United Nations was serious about the referendum and about Moroccan cooperation on this issue, it started to prepare a strategy based on two principles. The first principle was to concentrate all of its efforts on finding a legal basis to make the referendum plan inapplicable, subsequently defeating the idea of a referendum. This attempt included creating the problem of the lists. Polisario wanted to put a stumbling block so that it would not be possible to hold a referendum without the participation of all Saharans. Polisario has refused this idea, but if international pressures force Polisario to accept it, then the second principle will come to play. The second principle is documented in a memorandum known as the Selouk Memorandum. This plan calls for riots during the

referendum, attacks against security forces in the cities, and spreading chaos to impede the referendum process.

Gajmoula Bint Abi, former chairwoman of the Polisario Women's Association, said that Polisario has never accepted the idea of a referendum or intended to participate in it. She said: "The Polisario slogans at the international conferences are about war and using power to liberate the Sahara. These slogans contradict a peaceful, democratic solution. The Polisario leadership has not and will not respect the referendum. It is all lip service because the referendum means the end of this tyrannical military group that imposes its will over the Saharans in the camps. This fact is proved by the large number of people who have returned to Morocco."

In a meeting with AL-MAJALLAH, Hakim suggested that MINURSO change its role from that of a spectator to an active participant and attempt to break the siege on the camps so that the refugees would have the freedom of choice to return to their homes. Gajmoula agrees with him, adding: "The United Nations has a duty to intervene and break the siege of the Tindouf camps by exerting pressures on Algeria and the leadership of Polisario to give the people their chance to choose freely. Those who want to stay will stay, and those who want to leave will leave."

Military Weakness

One of the factors that added to the disintegration of Polisario is its military weakness, which increased because of the new international situation and the shutoff of military aid to the organization. Fadly Saleck, Polisario founder and a member of its supreme command and former secretary of the Saharan Republic, said after returning to Morocco last month that the Polisario army has no more than 7,000 soldiers. Salik was also the military attache in Algeria and Cuba. He said that "as far as weapons are concerned, Polisario has not received any new weapons since 1986. Any army that does not renew its weapons loses its fighting capabilities. There are also shortages of spare parts and fuel. Taking into account the organization's financial situation and the weakened contacts with its allies, the extent of the decrease in its fighting capabilities is considerable."

There also a more important element that contributed to Polisario disintegration—the new Moroccan Constitution and the new al-Jahawiyah system that is to be implemented in the Sahara first. Saharan leader Hajji Ibrahim thinks that this system would be the last nail in Polisario's coffin. Even though the details of the system have yet to be finalized, it entails decentralization in making the economic and local administrative decisions and serving the interests of every region. According to Basri, King Hassan II wanted a decentralized system in Morocco identical to that of Germany, but the German system could not be applied in Morocco. This system is not new to Morocco. The Constitutions of 1962, 1968, and 1972 stipulated the establishment of the Supreme Planning Council for National Development to study the regional problem on a national level. The new Constitution stipulates an additional elected council for every region. For the Sahara, this

could mean the first step toward a limited self-government under Moroccan sovereignty. It is certain that such an interpretation of the system would appeal to even the most extremist leaders of Polisario who are demanding independence for the Sahara. Gajmoula said: "This system is a great victory for the Moroccans, in general, and for the Saharans, in particular. As far as I am concerned, it is very important as a first step. There is no way but development. With the development of democracy, the new system shall develop."

Referendum or No Referendum

Basri said: "Our brothers in Polisario realize that a referendum, even according to the lists they want—meaning the lists of the 1974 Spanish census, which includes about 70,000 Saharans—would mean their defeat. That is why they try to maneuver politically and diplomatically to not have a referendum. They conspired with the Organization of African Unity and the fourth committee. The Security Council did not accept their attempts. Secretary General Butrus-Ghali and his representative, Mr. Khan, say that Polisario is responsible for delaying the issues. The permanent members of the Security Council started to warn Algeria and Polisario about the consequences of such maneuvers. Polisario will be held responsible unless it participates in the referendum".

Is there a specific time limit before the United Nations holds Polisario responsible for the delay?

The Moroccan Minister of the Interior said: "The United Nations is faced with more pressing problems than that of the Sahara. Butrus-Ghali spoke to the French television about the international problems for 90 minutes without mentioning the Sahara issue. When the world realizes that Polisario is responsible for impeding the referendum, the countries that finance the UN missions in the Sahara will terminate these missions. Polisario is aware that MINURSO provides it with diplomatic immunity and international representation. It is in Polisario's interests to go along with the international plan. If it does not, and MINURSO leaves the Sahara, Polisario will be the only loser. Algeria does not have the means to support Polisario. It does not want the situation to escalate. If Polisario, which reached the peak of its power at the end of the 1980's, tried to fuel the fire again, its attempt would be useless. The world would regard it as a group of bandits in a state of mutiny against a unified country that wants a unified Maghreb.

[Box, p 47]

'Our Officers Count Polisario Forces Daily at the Border'

The fierce war between the Moroccan Army and Polisario officially ended in September 1991, after both sides accepted the UN plan for a referendum on self-determination in the Sahara and a cease-fire to be supervised by a UN peacekeeping force under the command of General Luis Block. Some members of the referendum committee, which was led by Ya'qub Khan (a representative of the UN Secretary General), and some members of the identification committee began to arrive to the region.

AL-MAJALLAH met with General Block at his headquarters in el Aaiun to discuss the complaints by some Moroccan officials that his troops had neglected some Polisario movements beyond the security wall at the Saharan-Algerian border.

According to Gen. Block, the mission of his forces is to supervise the cease-fire agreement that paves the way for the United Nations to implement the international plan and to facilitate the mission of the international political officers to find a solution to the problem. Block was happy to note that the two sides have shown the utmost respect for the cease-fire agreement.

Some Moroccan officers have complained that the UN forces have not performed their duties because they neglected the movements of Polisario forces immediately after the cease-fire. They say that some of the Polisario forces crossed the border to set up strongholds along the eastern side the security wall. The General denied such movements have occurred, unless they took place before his arrival. He said: "The basic principle of MINURSO is credibility, which helps us win the confidence of both sides. Our observers on both sides of the security wall adhere to this principle."

He added: "In spite of the small number of UN forces, less than 200 soldiers, we are keen to assure our credibility. The task of keeping abreast of what is happening around us, either by the Polisario on the eastern side or Morocco on the western side, is very difficult. We have spread our observation posts on the Eastern side so that we have a presence in every place where there are Polisario forces. Their forces are known to us, and we count them practically every day. There is no movement unless it is logistic one in the direction specified by the international forces. That is why I assure you that it is impossible for Polisario to make the movements described by the Moroccan officials. Before the deployment of the UN forces, there were some movements and some infiltration across the border."

The international plan stipulates that the Saharan refugees under the control of the Polisario should be moved from the Tindouf camps to the Sahara to participate in the referendum. Any unorganized movement across the Algerian border is very dangerous because of minefields planted by both sides. General Block does not foresee any problems, because the international force will supervise the operation and is organizing the border-crossing operation from checkpoints used by his forces or by other paths that have been rendered safe. The operation will not be a haphazard one in which refugees throng across the border from every direction. He added: "This measure will greatly decrease the danger of the minefields, but it does not mean that there will be no accidents at all."

Some Polisario leaders who returned to Morocco request a wider role for the international forces, particularly in managing the refugee camps in Tindouf to alleviate the pressures on the refugees.

"In the meantime, there are some problems. The positions of the parties are somewhat different in spite of the efforts to find a solution to the problem. I do not know when the

term of my forces will expire, and it is difficult for me to estimate it. The problem is not military. It is political. I hope to be here when the problem is solved, but it seems that I will return home before that happens."

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Officials Comment on Postponement of Elections

Salih on Corruption, Violence

93AE0075A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
28 Oct 92 p 1

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Haydari: "Yemeni Elections Must be Free of Violence, Terrorism, Deceit, Manipulations"]

[Text] Yemeni President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih stated that the constituent assembly for the organization "Fighters of the Yemeni Revolution and Defense of Unity" will be convened and that "our country will experience a phase of preparation for parliamentary elections. We hope that our brothers of the Yemeni revolution will have an effective and positive role in awakening the masses of people to embark upon these elections in a democratic, civilized way, free of violence, terrorism, deceit, and political manipulation."

The Yemeni president, who opened the constitutional assembly of the "Fighters of the Yemeni Revolution and Defense of Unity" organization on 27 October 1992, said that "revolution and unity are entrusted to the honored fighters, who have not changed and who have sworn their loyalty to God, nation, and revolution."

On another level, the Yemeni Council of Deputies, in its 27 October session, discussed the ongoing preparations for the coming parliamentary elections and the activities of the Supreme Election Committee.

In light of views submitted by the deputies, the council decided to continue discussion of this matter, in accordance with information that the council will receive "from the Supreme Election Committee concerning its activities and the progress of preparations for the elections."

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman Nu'man, leader of the al-Dusturi Party, told AL-HAYAH: "It recently became clear to us that the game of postponing general elections and forming the Supreme Election Committee was a plot to prolong the transition period and delay the elections. We learned that the chairman of the Supreme Election Committee recently submitted a proposal to postpone the elections until the last part of February 1993. This gives the ruling powers the opportunity to continue their institutions under a constitutional declaration, which is expected to be issued shortly. This is a clear breach of the constitution."

Shaykh Nu'man added: "In my opinion, they have taken this step in order to avoid declaring a state of emergency in the country, which allows them to remain in power. Previously in one of its resolutions, the National Congress issued a call for a general strike on 22 November 1992, if the elections were postponed. We are considering this at

the present time, with the political parties, organizations, and social figures that have formed a national conference for this general strike."

In addition, the newspaper AL-TAJAMMU', published by the Yemeni Unionist Alliance Party, in its 26 October edition published in Aden, wrote that Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, speaker of the Council of Deputies, met on 24 October 1992 with a delegation representing the National Congress' Board of Coordination and Continuity. He received a statement from them issued by the board, along with resolutions and the charter of the National Congress. Nu'man exchanged points of view with the members of the delegation concerning the crisis stemming from the inability of the Supreme Election Committee to hold elections as scheduled.

The newspaper added that the delegation asked the Council of Deputies to support the demands of the Yemeni people, calling for respect for legitimacy and the holding of elections as scheduled in the Unity Agreement. They emphasized to Dr. Nu'man the commitment of the National Congress' resolutions, which call on the Council of Deputies to dissolve itself, for a general strike to be held, and for civil disobedience, "especially since it has become clear to all that the elections will not be held." Dr. Nu'man promised to submit the request (i.e., the National Congress' resolution) to the Office of Speaker of the Council of Deputies, and he called on political forces to "bear their full responsibility."

Postponement to Mid-February

93AE0075B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
29 Oct 92 p 1

[Article by Hamud Munsir in Sanaa and Lutfi Shatarah in Aden: "Yemeni Elections in February"]

[Text] Informed sources in the Yemeni capital have revealed that the postponement of election day has become certain and that members of the Supreme Election Committee announced the postponement at their 28 October meeting. In fact, they have begun to discuss the period of postponement required to guarantee good progress for stages of preparation for elections. In private statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, these sources added that the new anticipated date will be mid-February 1993.

It is worth mentioning that the elections' technical committee has only completed dividing election districts in 13 of the 18 Yemeni governorates. In addition, it has been unable to make any progress in its work during this week—other than certain routine, administrative actions—because dividing the districts, according to defined geographic and population standards, has not been completed.

It is expected that election date will be determined in a meeting between the Supreme Election Committee, the Presidency Council, the speaker of the Council of Deputies, the prime minister, and the chief of the Supreme Court in order to formulate the statement announcing the postponement of elections to the Yemeni people.

Certain Yemeni politicians and political party leaders' said the postponement "is beneficial to the two governing partners and supports keeping them in power." Consultations to resolve the disputes between the two ruling parties continue after the coordinating committee ceased work a few days ago because of its inability to reach a solution to any issue raised.

Justification for Postponement

93AE0075C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Oct 92 p 3

[Article by Hamud Munsir: "Responsibility for Postponement of Election Day Rests on Various State Institutions"]

[Text] The Yemeni Supreme Election Committee has placed responsibility for delay in completing its work on various state institutions, beginning with the government and the Council of Deputies, which put off promulgating the Law of General Elections, and ending with the Council of the Presidency, which did not announce the final composition of the committee until 18 August 1992. In addition, there were routine obstacles and internal disputes, along with a lack of available data regarding population statistics.

All of this was cited in a letter that the committee sent to the Presidency Council on the afternoon of 28 October 1992, in which it proposed scheduling election day for 17 February 1993. The following is the text of the message:

Honorable President Members of the Presidency Council,
Greetings:

The Supreme Election Committee, in appreciation of the historic task with which it has been honored, which is to prepare for and execute the first general parliamentary elections for the Yemeni Republic, cognizant of the huge responsibility vis-a-vis this important, civilized project, and aware that political and popular considerations are being directed toward the results of its work and are awaiting its completion, has the honor to inform you of the following:

I. The republican decree pertaining to formation of the Supreme Election Committee was issued on 18 August 1992, i.e., two months and 23 days before the end of the transitional period. That was done in accordance with Law No. 42, dated 11 August 1992. The committee began its mission as soon as the legal oaths were sworn, before the president of the Presidency Council.

It was the hope of political leaders, constitutional authorities, party organizations, and citizens, as well as of the Supreme Election Committee itself, that the committee would be able to hold the general parliamentary elections before the end of the transition period.

Whereas the Supreme Election Committee has spent more than two months since its work began in preparation, it finds that the remaining time in the transition period is insufficient to complete the remainder of its mission with regard to preparation and, then, execution of the actions of the general parliamentary elections, in two stages, before

21 November 1992, which is the date the transition period ends. The following reasons are pertinent:

1. The Supreme Election Committee's task is considered fundamental to laying stable foundations for the general parliamentary elections. It is well known that the committee started its activities from zero. There was no basic system to implement the Law of Elections, no permanent division of election districts throughout the republic, no fixed voter registration regulations in the newly partitioned election districts, and no material resources, not even a headquarters for the committee. In short, the Supreme Election Committee began from scratch.

If the Law of Elections requires the Supreme Election Committee—in ordinary circumstances—to begin election arrangements in January, so as to hold the election in November, and assumes an available election structure and stable electoral foundations, this only proves to us the difficulty of the tasks assigned to a supreme committee for elections, in comparison with the time required to implement those tasks.

2. The basic goal of the transition period, which was defined as two-and-a-half years from the date of the establishment of the Yemeni Republic, is to prepare for normal constitution life by the end of the transition. It was assumed that the matter of general parliamentary elections would be one of the important basic priorities of state authorities during the transition, but that was not done because:

- The issuing of the Law of General Elections was delayed much longer than it should have been. Law No. 41 for Elections was only promulgated on 8 June 1992, i.e., two years after the transition period began.
- The formation of the Supreme Election Committee was delayed for approximately two months beyond the date designated by the Law of General Elections in Article 84.
- The special composition of the Supreme Election Committee—by virtue of its membership—represents political parties and organizations. The number of members is more than the number on similar committees in normal circumstances. This has interfered with the committee's work flow, in order to guarantee trust and reassurance in the honesty of election processes, and to anchor democratic principles in those election processes.
- The subject of population data for the Yemeni Republic caused considerable debate, over which the committee spent a great deal of time. The Central Statistics Office submitted population data for the Yemeni Republic to the Supreme Election Committee on 27 August 1992 (in No. 84), in accordance with a request from the Supreme Election Committee chairman on 25 August 1992 (No. 8577). The estimate was 13,677,972 [numerals as published, but written out as thirteen million, six hundred seventy-seven thousand, six hundred seventy-two].

Upon discussion in the Supreme Election Committee concerning bases and criteria for the data submitted by the Central Statistics Office, a meeting was held between specialists from that agency, the chairman of the Supreme Election Committee, his deputy, and the chairman, deputy, and selected members of the technical committee. The agency specialists explained what was required, etc.

However, the Supreme Election Committee's meeting was followed by more debate on this matter. The Supreme Election Committee decided that the Central Statistics Office should prepare population data for the Yemeni Republic in light of Article 89 of the Law of Elections No. 41, issued on 8 June 1992. The Central Statistics Office submitted population data in light of that, totaling 14,256,733 [numerals as published, but written out as fourteen million, two hundred fifty-six thousand, seven hundred twenty-three].

The data were submitted to the Supreme Election Committee and were agreed to by everyone. The technical committee again prepared a plan to divide the districts in light of these data, despite the fact that it had been working on districting in light of the previous data that had been submitted by the Central Statistics Office. The technical committee was now to submit a plan for dividing the election districts based on the latest data. The districting plan will be completed two days from this date, so that the plan can be discussed in the Supreme Election Committee during the next few days and a final decision can be made.

There are other difficulties facing the Supreme Election Committee, and it is working to settle them, including what it will take to complete its discussions, so as to apply the law.

II. Despite the previously stated difficulties that the Supreme Election Committee faces, the committee has completed some of its tasks in the time since its formation:

- Confirmed the population statistics that were used as a basis to divide election districts;
- Determined the bylaws to implement the Law of General Elections;
- Formed subcommittees of the Supreme Election Committee, including technical, security, legal, media, and financial committees, as well as a secretariat for the Supreme Election Committee;
- Confirmed the plans and reports from the subcommittees of the Supreme Election Committee and directed the committees to implement these plans;
- Established the assisting work team in the various committees;
- Established the number of districts to be allocated to each governorate, based on the population data for each governorate, including the secretariat of the capital; and,
- Completed the documentation for the first of two election stages, which is the stage of registration.

III. The Supreme Election Committee still has the following preparation tasks to do:

- Reviewing and confirming the plan to divide election districts that was submitted by the technical committee, after study and debate based on the general standards in that regard;
- Reviewing and discussing the electoral guide submitted by the technical and legal committees and confirming it in final form;
- Deciding the matter of forming supervisory committees and basic, primary, and subordinate committees in each election district for the two stages of elections and for the separate periods for males and females in each stage and determining the number required for each stage, including reserves, and the way in which they will be managed and what qualifications will be required;
- Studying and reaching a decision on how to distribute these committees over all election stages and periods;
- Determining and arranging headquarters for the supervisory, basic, primary, and subordinate committees in all election districts for the two election stages, including the periods for males and females, determining the number required for each stage including reserves, and working to train and qualify their staffs;
- Undertaking security arrangements in coordination with the Ministries of Defense and Interior, security, governors, directors of security, commissioners of districts, and all others who require coordination;
- Confirming the supply of printed materials, all lists, etc., required for the first stage, including the two periods, along with preparing what is needed for the second stage, including the two periods, as well as learning what boxes there are from the election stages for the two Advisory Councils, the Supreme People's Assembly, the stage of the referendum, and whatever reforms are required, and purchasing the remaining supplies required;
- Defining the needs of the supervisory committees in the governorates and the election district committees for the first two-period stage and arranging for their supplies and transportation;

- Arranging transportation for members of the committees and determining the dates for their arrival to their headquarters and for starting their work;
- Arranging means of communications among the Supreme Election Committee, the supervisory committees in the governorates, and the district election committees; and,
- Deciding miscellaneous matters brought before the Supreme Election Committee.

IV. Concerning matters connected with the extension required to complete preparations to carry out the elections, the Supreme Election Committee deems the following:

- The Supreme Election Committee expects that preparations will be concluded by 25 November 1992.
- The extension required to implement the election actions is 83 days, beginning 26 November 1992, as follows: —One month for the process of recording and registering voters; —23 days to publish names of voters, receive challenges and decide them, and transcribe the final, permanent lists for registration; —One month for submission of candidacy applications, confirming conditions and data, reaching a decision on them, carrying out the election advertisement, and conducting the voting.

Accordingly, the date for voting will be 18 February 1993.

It should be noted that the previous extension was set so as not to injure the citizens' electoral rights. Moreover, implementation is based on no emergency obstacles developing before the Supreme Election Committee.

V. The Supreme Election Committee requests that:

- Announcement be made of the election date before the end of the transition period; and,
- That be done immediately following a broad-based meeting that will include the Presidency Council, the Supreme Election Committee, the Office of Speaker of the Council of Deputies, the prime minister, and the chief of the Supreme Court.

AFGHANISTAN

Official Views State of Education

93AS0210A Tehran RESALAT in Persian 31 Oct 92 p 4

[Interview with Shah Aqa Mojaddadi, deputy director of education of Afghanistan, by Iranian reporters in Afghanistan; date not given]

[Text] Kabul. IRNA. Overall Soviet efforts to destroy the religious culture of Afghan society in the course of 14 years not only failed to eliminate Islamic culture, but also made the people of Afghanistan more receptive to religious ideas.

In an interview with Iranian reporters sent to Afghanistan, Shah Aqa Mojaddadi, the deputy director of education in Afghanistan, spoke about some of the efforts of the former Soviet leaders to impose materialistic culture on this country.

He said: With the presence of Taraki and other Soviet puppets in Afghanistan the communist educational system openly replaced the existing system in the country, and Islamic concepts were replaced by Marxist concepts. He added: The KGB security forces of the Russians and Khad [secret service], affiliated with the communist regime in Afghanistan, were present in all the educational organizations of the country and responded with bullets to any criticism and opposition. Shah Aqa Mojaddadi added: This trend continued during the times of Taraki, Hafizollah Amin, and Babrak Karmal, and during the time of Najib due to the conditions that had been created, it was reduced somewhat. He said: While the true Afghan Mujahidin were living in prisons and torture chambers, the officials of the communist regime of this country claimed to be Muslims and on radio and television and the press spoke about their interest in Islam.

The deputy director of education in Afghanistan added: With the establishment of the Islamic regime in Afghanistan, we are determined to make the educational system conform to the sacred laws of Islam in place of the previous system in the country.

About the present condition of education in Afghanistan, Mojaddadi said: At present, 500,000 students are studying in elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the country, who after taking part in the national entrance examination of the universities and gaining admission, will start their specialized fields in mathematics, technical and social areas, humanities, experimental art, medicine, and teacher training.

He added: At present, every year there are 20,000 high school graduates in Afghanistan, of whom 10,000 are admitted to universities.

Mojaddadi added: Due to the security problems in the country, only a handful of the schools are active.

He announced the present number of teachers in the Education Department of Afghanistan to be 48,000 and added: In areas that are not under the control of the government, the salaries of teachers are provided by Mujahidin groups, and the needs of 250 schools are provided for by the educational center of Afghanistan in Peshawar.

Concerning the common language of schools in the country, Mojaddadi said: Seventy-five percent of the books through middle school are in Dari, Persian, and 25 percent are in Pashto. In the Pashto areas, all books at various levels are published in Pashto.

He added: In all schools, in addition to educational issues, extracurricular programs also exist that are active through the literary and cultural societies in the areas of educational competitions, military, relations with parents, security, and athletics.

Mojaddadi said that the official holidays of the schools in Afghanistan depend on the climate of the country and added: In cold areas, such as Kabul, the three-month holiday is in winter and in warm climates, in the summer. At the present, 80 percent of the girls' schools and 50 percent of the boys' schools in Kabul are closed, and despite the presence of teachers in schools, students do not go to class for security reasons, and teachers who have income problems and need to make a living do not agree to go to school.